

THE
REPARATION,

A
COMEDY,

AS PERFORMED AT THE

THEATRE-ROYAL

IN
DRURY-LANE,

By MILES PETER ANDREWS, Esq.

L O N D O N :

Printed for T. and W. LOWNDES, N^o 77, in Fleet-Street.

M.DCC.LXXXIV.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE Character of LOUISA, in this Play, was evidently written with a Design to offer it to Mrs. SIDDONS; but the Policy of the Theatre not permitting it, the Author has only to observe, that he thinks himself extremely fortunate in having been able to meet with so accomplish'd a Substitute.

The very favourable and flattering Reception this Comedy met with throughout, excepting in one single Instance, has induced the Author to retain the Passage which was objected to, in the Copy; that the Reader may be convinced, from tracing the Character, what little Ground there is for supposing he could have been guilty of any intentional Offence, by introducing Party Allusions. The whole Part of Sir GREGORY GLOYETOP, as it now stands, was written above four Months ago; and the Court Phrases were adopted only as incidental to the Character.



The lines with inverted commas are omitted in the representation.

P R O L O G U E.

Spoken by Mr. LEWES, in the Character of an "OLD
WOMAN."

By EDWARD TOPHAM, Esq.

START not, good folks!—I'm only come a wooing—
You know the fair sex ever will be doing—
In Moliere's days the practice was most common
For men to trust their works to some old woman,
Whose matron counsel, and approving choice,
Secur'd their favourite bard the public voice.

Will this bright circle then, who round me sit,
Deny my power of giving weight to wit?
Is there a gallant swain who dares repine,
Struck by the lustre of an eye like mine?
Oh! no—thank Heav'n! the baby-rage is past,
And elder ladies captivate at last:

The full-blown dame, who rules o'er ton and taste,
With rouge for roses, and for lilies paste,
Now reigns the Ovid of a new-made school,
To teach young gentlemen—to play the fool.

If in the tender passion then we shine,
And age can give us "smacks" as well as wine,
No wonder that the fashion is becoming,
And Church, Law, Politics, have their old women.

Our Bard to-night, all anxious for his fate,
Begg'd the indulgence of a tête-à-tête:

First I was coy—but women will give way—
He saw me tender, and produc'd his Play—
Requested I would make his case my own,
And plead a desperate cause before the town.

—Well then,—to speak at once my real mind—

For, on my virtue, I can't be unkind,
Save some old jokes which now and then appear,
And drop in Parliament, as well as here,
I trust this House will take the Treasury side,
Let the debates go on, and not divide.

Exit

*But as the Scenic Sisters long have varied,
And as we wish our measures may be carried,
To stop the mouths of critic opposition,
We form a tragi-comic coalition :*

*Water and wine—a beverage half and half—
Broad Humour just peeps in to make you laugh ;
While intermix'd the tender Scenes appear,
To draw from Beauty's eye Compassion's tear.*

*Such is our Author's plan—if trite or common,
Condemn me as a doating, false Old Woman !
—But mark, the critic who approves my bard,
May claim a “ chaste salute ” as his reward.*

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

M E N.

LORD HECTIC,	Mr. DODD,
SIR GREGORY GLOVETOP,	Mr. PARSONS,
COLONEL QUORUM,	Mr. LEWES,
LOVELESS,	Mr. BRERETON,
BELCOUR,	Mr. FARREN,
CAPTAIN HARDY,	Mr. PACKER,
CAPTAIN SWAGGER,	Mr. MOODY,
JANUS,	Mr. BANNISTER,
PICKAXE,	Mr. BADDELEY,

W O M E N.

LOUISA,	Miss FARREN,
HARRIET,	Mrs. BRERETON,
LADY BETTY WORMWOOD,	Miss POPE,
MISS PENELOPE ZODIAC,	Mrs. HOPKINS,
ANNA,	Mrs. WELLS,
CHILD,	

SCENE *at and near LORD HECTIC's Country Seat.*

THE
REPARATION.

A C T I.

S C E N E I.

An Avenue leading to LORD HECTIC'S House.

Enter BELCOUR and LOVELESS.

BELCOUR.

COME, come, my dear Loveless, don't be too rigid ;
you must pardon the extravagances of a lover.

Loveless. With all my heart, if they are not carried
too far—but I wou'd not have you let your imagination
run away with your reason.

Belcour. Impossible, my friend—No imagination can
do her justice ; I tell you, my Harriet is the charmingest
girl, the most enchanting creature upon earth : “ a per-
“ son endow'd with every grace, and a mind enrich'd
“ with every virtue.”

Loveless. In that case, my dear Belcour, don't trifle
with your happiness—Marry her immediately.

Belcour. Marry her !—That wou'd be trifling with
my happiness indeed—Why, you forget she is the daugh-
ter of our whimsical neighbour here, Sir Gregory

B

Glovesop,

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Glovetop, knighted by the old court for a forty years attendance upon it in the humble quality of gentleman-usher, and dismiss'd in the late reform, without any fortune but his stiff-topp'd gloves, and remains of a tatter'd wardrobe: think what a charming patrimony I shou'd be heir to—a short sword, and a dress'd coat with a hoop in it.

Loveless. Then, my gay, lively friend, let me entreat you, act like a man of honour. Consider the sensibility of an innocent mind; nor sport with the heart you cannot properly make your own.

Belcour. Nay, Loveless, now you are too serious. Is there any violent harm in using a little art to give a woman an opportunity of quieting her conscience, and gratifying, without the ceremonies, your inclination as well as her own?

Loveless. (agitated) Pray excuse me—I am the last man on earth you shou'd consult on such a subject.

Belcour. Come, come, this gravity does not fit well upon a man whom I have known the foremost in a frolic, and the first adviser of mischief—I expect your assistance in the business.—Say, shall I fairly take her off? or, if you think it better—suppose I pretend to marry her, and so—

Loveless. (more agitated) I beg you will urge me no further on this head—Indeed I am very unfit to give an opinion: your conversation probably may affect me more than you imagine—but let us call another topic.

Belcour. Why, I hope the name of marriage has not frighten'd you, because you have just got rid of the reality—Every body knows the terms you liv'd upon with Lady Susan; but it was a match of your father's making, and, as Heaven has kindly releas'd you from it, why the sooner you forget her the better. So pr'ythee now drop your heroics, and (as you once had a turn for intrigue)

trigue) put me in a way of obtaining my mistress; for have her I must, cost what it will.

Loveless. Then, my friend, remember—If you shou'd proceed, and sacrifice to a momentary inclination the rectitude of your heart, you will be as miserable as I am, and live to lament crimes you never can recall.

Belcour. My dear Loveless, explain yourself.

Loveless. Know then, before my marriage with Lady Susan, I was attach'd—tenderly attach'd, to the most lovely of her sex, the daughter of a gentleman who had serv'd his country with bravery and honour—but had retir'd on half pay, to a small neat dwelling near my father's park; where, wholly devoted to the education of his darling child, his only wish was to train her up in the paths of virtue—

Belcour. You affect me exceedingly—pray go on.

Loveless. The vicinity of our abodes gave me frequent opportunities of tracing the sensibility of Julia's mind, “and winning the affections of her virgin heart. Notwithstanding the humbleness of her fortune, I shou'd undoubtedly have married her, had I not too well known the ambitious views and rigid temper of my father.—Transported however with her blooming charms, which were daily heighten'd in my eyes by proofs of growing tenderness, incapable of existing without her;”—and, too conscious of her purity to expect to gain her by other means, I was base enough to listen to the specious arguments of libertine friends, and engaged in a plan to deceive her by a pretended marriage—I see you are shock'd at my villainy.

Belcour. Pray proceed.

Loveless. My family at length obliging me to unite myself with Lady Susan, I was compell'd to reveal the fatal secret.—O, Belcour! picture to yourself the distress of an unhappy woman, bereft of that honour, the only

portion which her father's narrow fortune cou'd bestow, by the very man in whom she had plac'd unbounded confidence—(*bursts into tears*) 'tis impossible to describe the conflict in her bosom. In vain I tried every argument I cou'd suggest to tranquillize her mind.—She treated my professions of undiminish'd regard with apparent coldness and disdain; and, together with our infant son, left the house where she resided; eluded every research I cou'd make; and at length, I have every reason to believe, fell a victim to my treachery and ingratitude.

“*Belcour.* I hope not—Come, come, my friend, your apprehensions may be groundless—She may yet live to soothe and cherish your repentant hours—at least your child may want a parent—Why then think of leaving a country where it is your duty to stay?—that if the unfortunate mother is no more, you may call down forgiveness from her relenting spirit, by encreas'd affection to her blameless son.

“*Loveless.* Alas! that consolation is denied me. He too, poor innocent, hath shar'd his mother's sorrows, and her fate. Notwithstanding my strictest enquiry, I have not been able to gain any tidings of either of them; my only success has been in discovering the retreat of Julia's disconsolate father.

“*Belcour.* But say, how did he sustain so rude a shock?

“*Loveless.* Oh! imagining that she was privy to the imposition of the marriage, he turn'd that rage against his daughter which ought only to have fallen on me, and imprecated severest curses upon himself if ever he saw her again.”

Belcour. I pity your situation, Loveless: “but recollect, that your conduct, tho' criminal, was the result rather of your father's disposition than your own.”

Loveless. “No, my friend, I have search'd every avenue
“nue

"nue to my heart, and find no hope of consolation."—I have however written to the injur'd veteran: confess'd the pretences under which his daughter was deceiv'd, and offer'd the only atonement in my power, the entire disposal of my fortune, as he shall think proper.—I shall wait his answer here; and then bid adieu to a country embitter'd to me by the severest of pangs—the sad remembrance of a disgraceful triumph over unsuspecting innocence and tenderest love.

Belcour. A truce to these melancholy ideas—"let us, like friends, be useful to each other." You shall profit by my advice, and I by your misfortunes.—"I will desist from every dishonourable plan against Harriet; and you shall learn, from my philosophy, to conquer griefs which cannot now avail." You shall stay with us this summer, and share the rural recreations of this charming seat—Our noble host, my Lord Hætic, will do all in his power to entertain you; and indeed it is impossible to restrain the smile at seeing him constantly labouring to become the very character you lament—an anxious wish to be thought a libertine, without constitution, or even inclination, to be really so.

Loveless. Absurd man! Yet how happy I shou'd think myself, had my desires never carry'd me further!

Belcour. Let me however caution you against his sister, Lady Betty Wormwood, who, without half his good qualities, has a much more mischievous disposition. She does all she can to keep her brother single, expecting to inherit great part of his fortune, and therefore charitably abuses every woman she hears of. My good aunt too, Miss Penelope Zodiac, her guest and companion, tho' she is generally in the clouds, now and then condescends to favour us with some earthly ideas, on purpose to join in the invectives against her own sex, with all that benignity

of disposition for which old maids are so remarkably famous.

Loveless. O spare your aunt, at least.

Belcour. Not I—I only follow her example—She spares nobody.—But let us adjourn to the mansion; my Lord has by this time, I dare say, finish'd his morning's ride on his chamber-horse; in which case his Irish cousin, Captain Swagger, “who has nothing good about him but his appetite,” will be bawling for his breakfast.—The Captain is very unlike his countrymen; for they are generally brave to an extreme—but he, I believe, is not so.

Loveless. (*in a pensive manner*) I am sorry for it—An Irishman without courage is very rarely to be met with; so that the novelty of it will surprize me at least—tho' nothing, I fear, can give me entertainment.

Belcour. (*taking his arm*) Come, come, my friend, dissipate these gloomy thoughts, and endeavour to be, what once you were, the life and ornament of society.

[*Exeunt familiarly.*]

S C E N E II.

A dressing-room in LORD HECTIC's house. He in a robe-de-chambre. CAPTAIN SWAGGER dress'd in an old uniform, long basket-hilted sword. My Lord seated on a chamber-horse, &c.

Lord Hectic. This is the way, Captain Swagger, to get air and exercise at one's leisure, by letters patent, like a gentleman; without being oblig'd to leave one's own chamber, and scour across the country for it, like a post-boy.

Swagger. True, my Lord—and, by my shoul, the horse won't be easily knock'd up.

Lord

Lord Heftic. (*getting off*) There, there—I have taken a pretty long ride to-day. (*coming forward*) What a fine thing it is to be hale and hearty! (*coughing*) one gets thro' so much fatigue without minding it; and looks as fresh as a rose after all (*coughing*.)

Swagger. Fait, and you may say that, my Lord—for I never minded any thing; and, I believe, I look full as much like a rose as yourself.

Lord Heftic. Fore gad, my valiant Captain, thy appearance is a little too terrific for the tranquillity of my country-seat—thou must really change that warlike habit of thine, and think of more peaceable services.

Swagger. O be easy now, my Lord, and let my habits alone. To be sure I've a custom of looking pretty manly in the face, and that's no common habit now amongst gentlemen; and, thanks to St. Patrick, I have a tolerable good constitution;—but so much the better for your Lordship, for I have been making pretty free with it these ten years past—for the sake of your reputation.

Lord Heftic. Psha! Swagger, it is not thy constitution I complain of, but thy head—thy crazy head, that cannot carry into execution the glorious enterprizes I plan for thee. What is the cabinet without the key? or any of the Boards without the first Lord?

Swagger. O, boo woo, don't be after comparing me to a board, and praising your own qualifications, when you know they're all mine: you have forgot what use I was to you when we travell'd together; how I constantly remember'd what was to happen, and carried away all the things we left behind us—

Lord Heftic. Yes, yes, I remember you pocketed the old bills, when I had paid the reck'ning.

Swagger. Faith and troth but I paid the reck'ning too—for the score was mark'd upon my back.

Lord Heftic. Well, but I forget all this while the

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interests of my dearest Louisa—a rapturous lover like me (*coughing*) does not always carry his wits about him—What answer didst thou bring from her?

Swagger. O fait, and it was very difficult to remember, for it was no answer at all.

Lord Hectic. How! what!

Swagger. Why, to be sure, the old knight here, Sir Gregory Glovetop, could not help thinking my *tête-à-tête* visits to Madam Louisa, especially as you were always one of the party, would do his daughter Harriet no good—so he has sent madam a-packing, that's all.

Lord Hectic. Louisa turned out of Sir Gregory's house! what havoc I make amongst the women!—But is she really turn'd adrift on my account?—Harkee, firrah, don't you know that I am all feeling—a mass of combustible sensibility? ha! ha!

Swagger. Well, what if you are—there's no occasion to go off here.

Lord Hectic. Why, art thou ignorant that I consider myself the sole and undivided property of the ladies, and that I build my reputation upon theirs?—Have not I set my heart upon carrying off this fair widow? and do I ever fail in matters of love? (*coughing*)

Swagger. Well, and hav'n't you sacrific'd the poor creature's happiness, by frightening away her friends from her? and can't you be satisfied with the distress you have already occasioned, and the ill reports that are spread about her?

Lord Hectic. No—there are no ill reports that I have been successful—so what distress is there to satisfy me? Fly therefore about the neighbourhood, and find where my treasure is hidden.

Swagger. O now, if that is all your treasure, be quiet and easy; because why, when one treasure is lost, another may be found—that's my philosophy.

Lord

Lord Hectic. Hold thy profane jargon—dost thou think the delicacy of my passions are so easily charm'd? and that I am form'd horribly robust, as thou art, without a grain of sensibility—a heart of stone, and nerves of cast iron?

Swagger. Nerves of cast iron!—upon my word, and very pretty things too. It may be the fashion to be sick to death, and *sensible* alive, as they call it, to every thing; but, thanks to St. Patrick, I never was either one or the other; and I hope I never shall.

Lord Hectic. Don't put me in a passion, Captain—but let me not see thy face again till thou hast found her.

Swagger. (turns himself away) O, to be sure, I will face about, if you please; and, if I can't find her, when I return why I must come in again in the same manner as I go out. It is only walking backwards, you know.

[Exit, walking forwards.]

Lord Hectic. (coughing) What a dreadful tax it is upon a man of fashion, to have his peace interrupted by the impertinence of a woman's beauty!—That a pair of black eyes should totally relax the fibres, and a fine shape destroy the whole nervous system!—Well, I have nothing for it but a good constitution to depend upon.

[Exit, coughing.]

S C E N E III.

An Apartment in LORD HECTIC'S house.

Enter LADY BETTY WORMWOOD, and Miss PENELOPE ZODIAC, disputing.

Miss Penelope. I tell you, Lady Betty, that science, and a knowledge of mathematics, geography, and tactics, is the first stone in the character of an unmarried woman.

Lady Betty. To be sure, Miss Penelope Zodiác, geography and tactics are unquestionably the principal supports of a woman's character; though, owing to the unaccountable ignorance of mankind, three parts of our sex get married without any such perfections.

Miss Penelope. Get married!—so much the worse. If women's minds were properly filled with elaborate researches, they would have no vacancy for such unseemly ideas. Think of the divine charms of philosophy—pure ethics—to wander from pole to pole, and to swim in the milky way.

Lady Betty. Undoubtedly, Madam, if a lady must swim, the milky way is as well as any other; and, to a roving mind, the wandering from pole to pole may be very delightful; but I should imagine the less a woman wanders the better.

Miss Penelope. Well, thank Heaven, my mind, I am proud to own, has never descended so low as to contemplate that improper creature a man.

Lady Betty. For goodness' sake let us then change the discourse, and talk about a woman.—What think you of Louisa, the object of my brother's present pursuit?

Miss Penelope. What that affected widow that lives at Sir Gregory Glovetop's, and pretends to be fond of nature; though she knows no more of the planetary system, than I do of making a pudding?—Oh, I detest such audacious creatures, as every lady of sentiment ought to do.

Lady Betty. For my part, I believe the wretch has the confidence to think that my brother entertains honourable designs upon her.

Miss Penelope. Entirely owing to her ignorance of mathematics: had she been studying Euclid she could not have had such a thought.

Lady Betty. Perhaps not—but, lest the lady should

never take to studies of that kind, I will tell you what I have done: you must know, though I am naturally of a tender disposition, and extremely averse to every thing that's cruel—yet, for the sake of example, I have prevailed upon old Sir Gregory to turn her out of his house. My brother will most probably forget her; and the minx will be happily left to starve in some distant country, so that we sha'n't be shock'd with her distress.

Miss Penelope. A very kind precaution—but indeed, Lady Betty Wormwood, your brother is a sad libertine—quite an ignis fatuus, as the learned call it.

Lady Betty. He certainly is, and therefore he had much better remain single, and keep his fortune in his own family.

Miss Penelope. To be sure, the whole world had better remain single.

Lady Betty. He will be delightfully disappointed when he finds the bird is flown. I have a very great regard for my brother, but I do love to see him mortified.

Miss Penelope. So do I, Lady Betty—because he will never allow that we women have superior understandings to the men. Oh, what was Plato, for instance, to the queen of Sheba? or what would the duke of Marlborough have done with the maid of Orleans?

Enter LORD HECTIC.

Lord Hectic. Done with her!—why whatever he pleas'd—men of prowess are always successful—for instance, myself (*coughing*).

Miss Penelope. I beg, my Lord, you will not shock my hearing with any improper compliments to any body—you will please to recollect I am an unmarried woman.

Lady Betty. Oh, my brother is only going to display his own qualifications; and surely they can't shock any lady.

Lord

Lord Hectic. No, to be sure—for egad I adore the whole sex—strive to make them all happy, (*coughing*) from the duchess down to the milk-maid; and, to do myself justice, few people more fortunate (*coughing*). Women of science, as you call them, are the easiest things in the world; as, for instance——

Miss Penelope. (*alarm'd*) Bless me! I hope your lordship is not going to be rude.

Lord Hectic. Rude, Miss Penelope!—in this company (*surveying her*)—I have not such an idea.

Miss Penelope. Indeed, my Lord, I blush for your sublunary conduct;—why can't you indulge your genius in a nobler way, and attach yourself to the heavenly bodies, as I do——

Lord Hectic. Why I do attach myself to the heavenly bodies; only I don't look among the stars for them, as you do.

Miss Penelope. Upon my word, if your lordship keeps going on in this manner I must quit the premises—I shall be afraid to trust myself under your roof——

Lord Hectic. Dear Miss Penelope Zodiac, don't have the least apprehension—you are perfectly safe, believe me.

Miss Penelope. I don't know that, my Lord—when you are carrying on your intrigues directly within our vortex, as one may say. I am told here is a wanton widow hard by.

Lord Hectic. Ah! the widow's situation at present is not quite so agreeable. But we seem to be playing at cross purposes; so, ladies, I'll attend your tea-equipage immediately—I have two or three morning petitioners to dispatch, who are waiting without: they won't detain me long; for I always promise every thing they ask, to shorten conversation—and then you shall see what havoc good spirits and sound health (*coughing*) can make amidst your French rolls and butter. [*Exit Lady Betty.*

Miss

Miss Penelope. (going) Au revoir, my Lord.—But I with you wou'd not turn so much upon your own axis.

[*Exit Miss Penelope.*]

Lord Hestie. Very whimsical advice.—Egad, I believe the old spinster wants me to take a turn with her.

[*Exit.*]

S C E N E IV.

An Apartment in an old House belonging to Sir GREGORY GLOVETOP, furnished in a very antique manner, decorated with Ornaments of Heraldry, Coats of Arms, Badges, Banners, and antient Orders.

Enter SIR GREGORY, somewhat heated, followed by
HARRIET.

Sir Gregory. Upon my decorum, Harriet, I am quite ashamed of you.—“You have no idea of punctillo, and form, and etiquette, and ceremony; not an atom of the old court about you, as my name is Sir Gregory Glovetop.

“*Harriet.* Consider, dear Sir, the difference of our years: saving your presence, it is not to be expected that I should wish to have any thing old about me.

“*Sir Gregory.*” Why, child, I swear by my knight-hood, you are as rude and unpolished as a beef-eater.—Will you never entertain a proper respect for antient customs?

Harriet. Lord, papa, am I to be blamed, because I have the misfortune not to be so old as my grandmother?—Besides, I have been bred up in the country, and cannot have had an opportunity of seeing or improving from courts.—

Sir Gregory. What! not had an opportunity of improving! han't you seen me? Study my manners and address;

dress; and then learn what would be becoming in a young woman. A fine example, indeed, thrown away, if I, who have lived in the circle, presided at drawing-rooms, bow'd at levees, eat cake and caudle-royal, should have danc'd, and bow'd, and eat for no purpose!—I beg I may hear no more of this uncourtier-like friendship you profess for Louisa.

Harriet. Sure, sir, our long intimacy, her amiable disposition, and her hard fortune, together with the manner in which she was obliged to quit our house, after having been admitted into it as a resident, must leave a regret upon my mind, which I hope you will allow not quite unjustifiable.

Sir Gregory. Quite the reverse, I assure you; and not a precedent for it in the red book. I allow no friendship, but of form: when people are out of place, the ceremony is to forget them—a squeeze by the hand—or a proper nod of the head—but no more;—no sorrow upon the countenance, except at a court-mourning.—That was the rule in my time, and I never can forget the lord chamberlain.

Harriet. But, my dear papa, was it not rather unkind to compel my unhappy friend to retire from beneath your roof, because that odious Lord Hectic would plague her with unsought-for solicitations; and to force her and her little infant to seek a new habitation, for impertinencies which hurt her peace more than they cou'd yours?

Sir Gregory. Hush, child! Lords have great privileges, and, at the old court, carried a dignity which, with a proper dress, a full-bottom'd periwig, and a short sword, were truly respectable.—But, let me tell you, that no person who has had the honour of dining with the corps diplomatique, can or will brook great coats and dirty boots—I mean no offence to the peerage,

Harriet. My dear papa, can you imagine, that a
mind

mind like Louisa's, so worn with anxiety, can thus easily regain its happiness?

Sir Gregory. Ay, I always thought she was too pensive for a well-bred person. You should have seen me at a birth-night, bowing, and simpering, and squeezing, and nodding, and handing wine among peers and peeresses, laced down to my shoes; stockings rolled up; and periwig in full float; then, I think, you would have taken me for somebody—every feature curl'd into a smile, and not one look of thought upon my countenance.

Harriet. But surely, grief was natural to the tenderness of a disposition like Louisa's—her fortunes were of the humblest kind, and she had probably lost the husband of her fondest affection.

Sir Gregory. The French Duchess of Pantoufle lost five husbands, and always appear'd in her place.

Harriet. Then, Sir, consider the unprotected state of her little one—the sweetest boy! you could not help being pleased with him.

Sir Gregory. Yes, the boy might have done for a page—I had some thoughts of teaching him the true court-step myself—but that ministry are out, and so we'll think no more about them.

Harriet. My dear sir, picture to yourself her situation—alone, deserted—no friend to sooth—no parent to protect.

Sir Gregory. Ay, there again;—her father is still living; why don't he send an envoy, or plenipo, to the place of her residence?—you say, he was displeased with her marriage; what of that? there is no occasion for affection to preserve ceremony—I remember Count Balderblouski, from Poland, had no intercourse with his child for twenty years; yet they always kept up decors, solemnized their birth-days at five hundred miles distance—and hated each other with civility.

Harriet.

Harriet. Wou'd Louisa had a father's home, as I have, to retreat to, instead of being forc'd to seek an asylum among strangers; who, unacquainted with the gentleness of her disposition, may aggravate the sorrows which they cannot feel!

Sir Gregory. Can I help it, child, if every one is not so well versed in politeness as I am?—Besides, I am naturally gentle, and have said to her a thousand times, that no one would be so charitable to her as myself.—Ma'am, says I to her, in the kindest manner, you are left destitute—a kind of outcast—but what of that? behave properly, and I will condescend to give you a certain degree of consequence.

Harriet. Then, Sir, recal your cruel decree, and indulge your Harriet with the pleasure of bringing back under the same roof the friend and companion of her earliest years.

Sir Gregory. What, child! when I have told you I am gentle, dare you prescribe to me how I ought to act! I that was the corner-stone of the old court; brought up amongst maids of honour and bed-chamber ladies, “admitted to the back-stairs, and have peep'd through the closet key-hole.” O, I am petrified by your presumption!

Harriet. My dear papa, I hope you are not offended at my presuming to plead the cause of friendship—

Sir Gregory. Yes, child, I am offended.—Now, indeed, people don't know when they ought to be so;—affect to be pleased, when they are quite out of humour; laugh at every thing; and want a demeanor in their resentments; but, thank Heaven, I am better acquainted with dignity.—The old Lord Burleigh, when he was offended—he—hum!—I believe he walked off, and said nothing.

[*Exit, retiring backwards stately and sulkily.*]

Harriet. (sola) And must I sacrifice to these unmeaning forms of my father each emotion of my heart? forsake my virtuous—

virtuous and much-injured friend, in whose sweet society I have enjoyed so many happy hours, and from whose generous counsels my inexperienced youth has reaped so much advantage!—No; every sentiment of gratitude and humanity forbid it. I have already consulted my Belcour on the occasion: his tenderness for me is, I think, sincere; and he must doubtless prize that warmth of friendship in his Harriet's bosom, which may lead him to expect she can as forcibly feel a softer passion. [Exit.

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

A C T II.

S C E N E I.

*A retir'd Cottage, with a View of the Country: A Seat
at the Foot of a Tree, near the Door of the Cottage.*

LOUISA coming forward with a Book.

HOW vain is the philosophy which books would preach up to us, to assuage the real anguish of the heart!—The wounded mind, that wanders to them for consolation, returns with double force to home-felt grief; and, while it feels poignantly for feign'd distress, with added pangs will contemplate its own.—Then how can I expect to find relief from study? mark'd out for affliction from life's earliest dawn, its ripening day but brings encrease of woe.—Alas! that charming season of youth, when all around, gay, flattering expectation gilds the scene, and every coming hour seems wing'd with new delight, for me teem'd only with misfortune!—Born with a heart too tender, and perhaps too sanguine, I fondly plann'd delusive schemes of happiness, which Fate decreed I never should enjoy. One friend,—one only friend the world had left me; she too I now must lose.—Poor Harriet!—"tho' tormented by the caprices of
"a weak father, may'st thou never suffer half the misery
"of thy distracted friend!" My child too,—my little smiling boy,—he must be for a time deserted.—Alas! who knows how long?

Enter

Enter ANNA and the child from the cottage.

Anna. My dear lady, every thing is ready, as you order'd, and your writing-box and the miniature picture are left upon your table.—But, my lov'd mistress—forgive my boldness—can you really bear to leave your sweet companion behind you?—will you indeed trust him with me while you are gone?

Louisa. Trust him with you, my Anna! Alas, to whom else can I bequeath him?—The unfeeling world hath barr'd each door against him, and poverty's hard hand leads forth his infant steps.—Now, too, he must forego a parent's tenderness;—but I hope our separation will not be long; and you, who feel for him a mother's love, will, I think, guard him with a mother's anxiety.

Child. Pray, mayn't I go too?

Louisa. No, my angel,—my journey would fatigue you—its object is but to do you service—may its wishes be accomplished! and may my darling child's maturing years be happier than his morn of life has promised!—Here, Anna, take this trifle (*giving a purse*) I wish it were larger for your sake—but Fortune allows me to be profuse of nothing but my thankfulness;—it will serve, perhaps, to defray the necessary expences of my Fred'ric; for the rest, dispose of it as you like.

Anna. Pray now, my dear lady, excuse me.—Indeed I cannot accept of it.—You have been always a tender mistress, and I have sav'd a something in your service,—a trifle indeed, but how can I employ it better than in returning it to the dear child of her from whose goodness first it came?

Louisa. Hold, hold; your generosity oppresses, overpowers me—but some one is coming this way:—retire, therefore, for a moment—I would not that strangers

should know how sensibly I'm affected, by the exalted behaviour of my more than friend.

[They go into the cottage.]

Enter HARRIET hastily.

Harriet. My dearest Louisa, I would not lose an instant in hastening to you, the moment I cou'd escape from my father. But wherefore these tears?—Your boy—my little play-fellow, I hope, is well.

Louisa. Well, very well;—I grieve only to be the cause of so much trouble to my Harriet.—Alas! I seem born to give uneasiness to all my friends;—at least the few I have left.

Harriet. Come, my Louisa, conquer this despondency—indeed you have a great many friends—every good mind must be so.

Louisa. How soothing is your sensibility!—why am I flatter'd with kindness, only to make the parting with it more severe?

Harriet. Parting, Louisa! what is it you mean? Do not imagine this misunderstanding can long continue—assure yourself we shall soon again be happy; and this little interval will but increase the charms of our renewed society.

Louisa. Impossible—my resolution is taken:—there is a person whose regard, notwithstanding long neglect, I still hold it my duty to solicit:—once he has refused, cruelly refused to hear me—shou'd his unkindness still continue—but no matter.—At a distance, Harriet, I may perhaps have courage to reveal to you a story, which my blushes wou'd prevent me from doing in your presence.

Harriet. (*Changing her manner*) What then, my fair friend,—there is a some one whose regard you are more anxious to solicit than that of your humble servant.

—In

—In truth I ought to have consider'd that immoderate grief in a widow, a young, handsome widow, like you, was not altogether so natural.

Louisa. Indeed, Harriet, you mistake me much.

Harriet. In truth but I do not.—No wonder that the gallant addresses of our neighbour, Colonel Quorum, that military dispenser of warrants, and settler of disputes, should all be lost upon you.

Louisa. Lost upon me indeed!—O my gay, sprightly, yet feeling friend! wou'd I cou'd always be the occasion of calling forth that charming vivacity! The Colonel, I agree with you, has certainly an excellent heart, and notwithstanding his violence, and his continued swearing—

Harriet. Swearing!—Oh, he is a justice of peace, you know, and is us'd to it;—besides, a lover shou'd always have a good stock of oaths to begin with;—but, laughing apart, Louisa, he has an ample fortune, and is sincerely attached to you.

Louisa. How can you talk to me seriously on such a subject?

Harriet. Nay, if your affections are really engaged, I mention it no more;—but otherwise I shou'd have said, that your duty to the deceased has been more than paid; and, though I cannot imagine that here your heart wou'd be deeply interested, yet you have a child, whose welfare is your care—*independence is offer'd to him: he has no father's fortune, give him therefore a claim to inherit one.*

Louisa. Pray drop the subject,—perhaps he has a father, and may not ask the bounties of a stranger;—perhaps—what am I saying?—Pray Harriet, believe me, I was thinking of something else, and did not properly attend to your discourse.

Harriet. (taking her hand) And is there, my Louisa, any thing which you dare not reveal to your friend?

Some private grief that you think her unworthy to be trusted with.—Tho' all your Harriet's inmost thoughts have long been lodg'd in her Louisa's bosom.

Enter PICKAXE hastily.

Pickaxe. Madam, I am so glad I have found you; for I've been in every corner of the parish these two days, with a message from my master, Colonel Quorum, and no tidings cou'd be heard of you.—So I went into the ale-house hard by; for there, thinks I—but I beg pardon for being out of breath.—

Louisa. There is no occasion to beg pardon,—but pray don't be in such a hurry;—you'll suffocate yourself, Mr. Pickaxe.

Pickaxe. True, madam, I cannot talk so fast as the women, as I say to my wife;—but no matter for that:—so, going into the ale-house, I heard as how a strange lady, which I knew must be you, was come to live hereabouts, and that Sir Gregory Glovetop,—I beg your papa's pardon, Miss Harriet—had turn'd Madam out of doors, which was being a little upon the rumbusticle with a lady, says I,—but no matter for that;—I never talk of any body's affairs but my own.

Harriet. If you keep to that resolution we shall never hear any thing of your master's.

Pickaxe. O Madam, never fear him—he'll make himself heard when he's in a passion;—and, indeed, to speak by the statutes, as master calls it, he is in a very great passion for Madam Louisa; for the moment he heard how your ladyship was treated, quite no better than a vagrant, he swore he would commit the whole parish, and Sir Gregory Glovetop into the bargain—but Lord, Sir, says I—its all the better for your worship, for the lady, as I may say, being a little at a nonplus, and not knowing
where

where to turn herself, who knows but she may face about to your worship's regimentals?

Harriet. Why, Mr. Pickaxe, you seem to have form'd a very just opinion of the sex—

Pickaxe. Lord, Ma'am! as I said to my master when he had done swearing, I know them—Madam Louisa must be in trouble: she is not like Miss Harriet, as I said, gallanting it away of her own accord with the gentleman in the green walk, because she is in love with him herself—No, no, Madam Louisa wants pressing, and a bit of vexation—and then she'll come to—

Louisa. Sure, my honest friend, you cannot think I want vexation; however, I am not going to be angry, for if such is your interpretation, Mr. Pickaxe, it will be very dangerous to be vex'd in your company.

Pickaxe. Why it's my fault, as I say to myself, to be sincere;—for, as I said to his worship, what can you want with a wife? have not you the disturbances of the whole parish to settle, and to swear (I mean to hear people swear) from morning till night—and then, since you took to training volunteers, says I, and to firing great guns, and have peace neither at home nor abroad, what the Devil, says I to his worship, can you want with a wife?

Harriet. And what could his worship answer to that?

Pickaxe. Ah, madam, it's my fault not to be minded, because I say little; but I verily believe as how, if Madam Louisa wou'd but listen to his addresses, there is not a justice of peace in the whole hundred that wou'd commit matrimony sooner—

Louisa. Upon my word, Mr. Pickaxe, the Colonel has no occasion to say much for himself, while he has so able an advocate.

Pickaxe. Ah, madam, a few kind words from you wou'd make a man of him again; for, to say truth, he is

sadly out of sorts—can't sign a warrant in peace.—Do, Madam, sent him a little comfort, be it ever so cold;—do but say you love him now—if its only to please him.

Louisa. Indeed, my good friend, I cannot say that to any man.

Pickaxe. Well, Ma'am, if you can't love him, say you'll marry him, and let t'other come by and by;—I'm sure Miss Harriet here wou'd not be so difficult,

Harriet. I beg, Mr. Pickaxe, you will not be fancying things about me.

Pickaxe. Fancying things!—No, Ma'am, I leave that to the gentleman in the green walk.—I ask pardon for being sincere;—but, as I was saying, if you wou'd only be so good as to give him a kind look or two, just as much as to 'say I see you,' he'd go quite out of his wits, and be the happiest man in the world.—Come, Ma'am, I'll tell him you like his carriage—his air, and the calf of his leg.—

Louisa. I request you will tell him no such thing.

Pickaxe. That you think him a fine officer, and a good justice of peace.—

Louisa. I make no doubt but he is both; but let me intreat you not to mention that I say any thing.

Pickaxe. Well, Ma'am; then I'll only say that I said it—and that you said nothing. [Exit.

Harriet. Ha! ha! upon my word there is something entertaining in the absurdities of that fellow.

Louisa. Yes, for they have occasioned a momentary suspension of my sorrows.

Harriet. For Heaven's sake, my dear Louisa, explain to me the mystery which, before we were interrupted, your last words conveyed.

Louisa. Oh Harriet! spare me on that subject.—It is a long and melancholy tale, that will require a resolution which at present I cannot command.

Harriet. Will you then forsake me? and leave her, whom

whom you used to call the partner of your heart, a stranger to those disquiets which she would gladly participate, and anxiously endeavour to sooth?

Louisa. My kind, my tender Harriet, assure yourself, cost me what it will, before we finally separate, you shall be fully acquainted with the sad story of Louisa's woes—then perhaps my soften'd friend will find another and a newer tear to give to my misfortunes—perhaps she'll clasp me nearer to her heart—perhaps she'll hold me at a fearful distance. However it may turn out—believe me, the parting pang will deeply rend my bosom; and absence, time, nor circumstance, shall ever erase the fond remembrance of my Harriet's virtues.

[*Exit Louisa into her cottage—Harriet opposite.*]

S C E N E II.

An Apartment in LORD HECTIC'S House.

Enter LORD HECTIC, LOVELESS, and BELCOUR.

Lord Hectic. Yes, yes, Belcour, I know you and your friend Loveless must laugh at us country 'squires. You London gentlemen have no taste for rural charms, and the ruddy looks of the country—hem! hem!—for my part, however, give me the old English constitution.

Loveless. I hope your Lordship feels no necessity for that wish.

Lord Hectic. Me! hem! by no means—I speak only of the charms of rising early in a morning, taking a long ride, breathing the keen air, hem!—and pursuing those active pleasures that strengthen and invigorate, and make us Englishmen the terrors of the world.

Belcour. Bravo, my Lord!—to say truth I shou'd not have suspected your having a taste for rural sports, shooting, fox-hunting, and the et cæteras of a country life.

Lord

Lord Heftic. No more I have—do you think I want to rival my game-keeper?—Those were the barbarous arts of our ancestors in the days of boxing, who affected to be stronger, hem! than a gentleman ought to be—No, no, I mean the little innocent delights—the smiling wreath, hem!—and myrtle bower.

Belcour. Yes, my Lord, and the smiling beauties in that bower—a London out of town—the charms of Pall-mall in the groves of Hampshire—that, I presume, is your Lordship's rural life; at least if we may trust the gallant chronicles of your Lordship's seat.

Lord Heftic. O fie! Belcour—But do they say that I'm no Joseph?—Juvenile follies, though, shou'd be forgiven—Some people do these things out of vanity, that surprizes me; merely to be talk'd of, Mr. Loveless.

Loveless. And a miserable vanity it is, as your Lordship observes. Passion, indeed, may plead some excuse for a momentary indulgence of it; but we should ask no triumphs for our infirmities.

Lord Heftic. True, Mr. Loveless—upon my word—a very—hem! hem! a very just observation.

Belcour. Aye; but then, my Lord, that wou'd be too severe a judgment, were it to extend to every little gallantry with a grizette.

Lord Heftic. True again, my dear Belcour; some allowance ought to be made, for, hem! the errors of the constitution.

Loveless. And upon my word his Lordship has some right to plead weakness in that article—therefore I retract my opinion.

Lord Heftic. Ah, I fear you do but flatter me, now—for you know, Belcour, I am a little of a—hem! of a libertine; and, to tell you the truth—but your friend Loveless there looks so moral and serious, it's impossible to say any thing.

Belcour.

Belcour. Oh, a town man—a perfect town man—don't mind him—a mere hypocrite.

Lord Hectic. Egad then I need not mind him—All a sham, ha? not so innocent as one you'd imagine—never deceived any woman. (*smiling.*)

Belcour. Psha! no more than you have.

Loveless. I believe, my Lord, we have neither of us had any transaction of that kind to boast of.

Lord Hectic. Boast of!—by no means—but, *entre nous*, I must confess, without vanity, that I do succeed pretty well amongst the ladies—hem! A peer, you know, carries an appearance—a blaze, a hem! hem!—the girls are astonished—dress makes its way—and—a star for a garter.

Belcour. A garter! O that's the game you pursue.

Lord Hectic. To be sure—woman is the game of a man of spirit—hem! and I have found out such an object to chase; and, with your assistance, have no doubt but we shall run it down.

Loveless. Can my assistance be necessary? I fear, my Lord, it will not much avail.

Lord Hectic. Yes, yes, boys, you must all assist; and fine sport we shall have of it—for the lady affects to have virtue, and stuff of that kind!—hem!—but in the country we do as you do in town, treat it as a pretence—mere pretence. Besides, I only begin with coaxing, and if that won't do, I proceed to vigorous measures—hem! hem!—that's the way to succeed with the women—en't it, Belcour?

Belcour. Your Lordship, indeed, wants little instruction.

Lord Hectic. No, no; 'egad I am pretty well at those things—'tis not a little that stops me. You wou'd go thro' any thing, I dare say, for a fine woman, Mr. Loveless. I mean it as a compliment—so don't be ashamed—

But

But I won't be cruel to the poor creature. I intend to behave well; and, when my passion is over—hem! and if she has shewn a regard for me, I shall marry her to a good sort of fellow you may have seen in the house—a Captain Swagger.

Enter CAPTAIN SWAGGER.

Swagger. Faith, my Lord, and here I am, like the old proverb about bad news; and a sad story I've found out, for Madam Louisa's not to be heard of—so I cou'd discover nothing.

Belcour. What then, you have found out a sad story about nothing?

Swagger. To be sure—for they say she is going to be married to Colonel Quorum.

Lord Hastic. Married! undone—

Swagger. Yes, she has undone herself—in order that she mayn't be ruined.

Lord Hastic. What reason hast thou to think so?

Swagger. First and foremost, as I was taking a little dram at the public-house, just to cool me—who shou'd come by but Mr. Pickaxe, the Colonel's clerk, or rather his aid-de-camp, in such a hurry—and, though I asked him to take a sup, he wou'd not open his lips upon the subject—upon my shoul he never refused it before—a bad sign that.

Belcour. To be sure; an unusual sobriety looks like marriage—an unlucky omen for your Lordship.

Swagger. Secondly, when I pass'd the Colonel's house, I observed the great gun, that used to be in the dog-kennel, was haul'd out before his door, by way of defence.

Doveless. Nothing can be more probable—he expects an attack, I suppose.

Swagger. Thirdly, upon the grass-plot before the parlour—

parlour-window, what shou'd I see, but his old regimental waistcoat and breeches laying out to air.

Lord Hectic. Zounds, there's certainly a something in the wind.

Swagger. And, fourthly, the stag's horns are taken down before the gate.

Belcour. Not a trait of the batchelor remaining—Why, your Lordship will lose the honour of providing for the lady—

Lord Hectic. Gad zooks! after all the trouble—hem! hem! I have had, and the secrecy I have kept—to be disappointed—hem!—no respect to a man of fashion! hem! Zounds! I will know where she is gone to—that old fool, Sir Gregory Glovetop, shall inform me why he dar'd turn a lady out of his house that I set my heart upon: hem! hem!—pray, gentlemen, excuse the warmth of my constitution.

Belcour. Come, come, my Lord—be more tranquil—the old English constitution was not disturb'd in this manner; besides, I dare say, things are but half so bad as they are related; for I make no doubt but the Captain saw double the whole time.

Lord Hectic. But, Mr. Loveless—Sir, you who are a man of gallantry; think of the hardship of a beautiful young woman, taught—hem! hem!—taught prudence by an old fellow just at the very last moment—hem! hem!

(coughs violently.)

Swagger. Arrah now, my dear Lord, it will be your last moment, if you put yourself into these passions about the women—for my part, I always advise following the ladies without any passion at all.

Loveless. The coolest advice, Captain, I ever heard in my life.

Lord Hectic. Gentlemen, excuse me—you see I'm overcome by the difficulty of—hem! hem!—a constitutional

tional warmth—but your leave for a while—pray make free with every thing in my house—hem!—my sister and Miss Penelope will be glad to be treated without ceremony!—hem!—but, hem!—Zounds!—I'll revenge this prudery by ruining the whole sex.

[Exit coughing and muttering.

Swagger. (calling after him) Upon my shoul the sex won't have much to fear—they can ruin your Lordship much easier.

[Exit.

Belcour. Well, Loveless—do you not think your errors more venial, when you see such characters as Lord Hectic's—libertines against nature, and vicious without even the excuses of inclination?

Loveless. No, my friend, I am too incorrigible in my repentance to receive any consolation from the follies of others—nay more, do you know that I am Quixote enough in virtue to wish that Lord Hectic may be disappointed in his schemes, and even to feel interested that he should?

Belcour. I too am a convert to your sentiments,—my friend's continued dejection, while it grieves my heart, corrects it.—I look upon the achievements of gallantry with less ardor than heretofore; and I can conceive it full as inglorious to rob youth and innocence of its peace, as to pilfer the property of my neighbour.

Loveless. Can you then wonder at my sensibility for this ill-fated fair one?

Belcour. Poor Louisa!—did you but know her, you would indeed be interested in her favour.—A beautiful young widow, left with an infant child, in circumstances the most humiliating.

Loveless. What then, she is really a woman of character, whose afflictions are her only crimes?

Belcour. Upon my word, Loveless, I believe so—I have often seen and convers'd with her at Sir Gregory's;

and

and I confess, in spite of my natural levity, I always respected the sadness that seem'd to weigh her down.

Loveless. Then, Belcour, if such is her situation, it would be criminal even to suffer any aggravation of her misfortunes;—to be a passive spectator of the distress we can alleviate, is unpardonable in any man—but it is cowardice in the extreme to remain unmov'd, when the virtuous sorrows of an afflicted woman demand our assistance. [*Exeunt.*]

S C E N E III.

An old castle, battlements, bastions, &c. in whimsical manner; an old moat, and a draw-bridge; a great gun at the entrance.

Enter COLONEL QUORUM from the castle, with a book under his arm; PICKAXE following.

Col. Quorum. And have you the confidence to say, that the lady said nothing?

Pickaxe. And please your worship, what could she say better? for I mention'd every thing that was to be said in your honour's favour.—Ma'am, says I—you don't know what you hesitate about—a great justice, and a good officer—understands the rules of the army—and has written a book about law—not very young indeed—but then has a flashy appearance—never in a passion in his whole life.—Such a temper, there's no describing it.—

Col. Quorum. Ay, Pickaxe, you were right to say, I was of a mild disposition—it goes a great way with the ladies—and as for the men—death and fury! I should like to see him who durst deny it.

Pickaxe. I am sure I am not the man to do it—sub-
mission

mission provokes nobody, as I say—so your honour can't be angry with me—but, if I might be so bold to advise—

Col. Quorum. Stop! I never take advice but on the parade, or at the quarter-sessions—there, indeed—on the bench a justice may submit to counsel—but, zounds! I flatter myself I can attack and subdue the ladies without any advice at all.

Pickaxe. And the sooner you do both the better; for I heard it whisper'd, as how Madam Louisa was about to leave the country—ah, your honour, tho' she affects to take on, and to hold herself up—all is not as it should be.

Col. Quorum. Hold herself up!—I like her the better for it—I'll tell you what, Pickaxe, as the attendant of wealth and prosperity, there is nothing so insulting as pride; but, in more humble fortune, it supports the character: and, damn me, may I never swear an oath, if I shall not be more flatter'd with her affection, shou'd I find her pride the only support she has;—so I'm determin'd to marry her immediately. *(Going.)*

Pickaxe. Stop, stop, your honour, indeed you had better ask her consent first.

Col. Quorum. Don't provoke me—I tell you she must, she shall, consent: besides, has not she given me a thousand proofs of her regard? Didn't she look over my prayer-book last Sunday at church; and smile, because I chanc'd to open it at matrimony?—I'm convinc'd she has a great stock of tenderness for me.

Pickaxe. Aye, your worihip—I hope it's not a laughing stock—

Col. Quorum. For shame, Pickaxe—did not she shed a tear the other day, when I hinted that love often made the best of us unhappy.

Pickaxe. Yes, yes; the women can laugh and cry just when they please, as I lay to my wife.

Col.

Col. Quorum. Pickaxe, don't put me in a passion—Zounds and fire! she shall have me—why, I tell you, I have order'd the lawyer to attend me with the writings—and there's no stopping the law; that will have its course—what the devil am I to do?—I say she must—I say he will—oh, here he comes.

Enter JANUS, with a parcel.

Master Janus you are as punctual—

Janus. Yes; as punctual as a subpoena—here are the writings finely copied out. Very handsome provision indeed on your part—but said lady, whoever she is—left a blank for her name—said lady seems not to have much property.

Pickaxe. Ah! that's neither here nor there.

Janus. Well, Colonel, if said lady is willing, as the law supposes she is, we have nothing to do but to put her in instead of the blank: favour me, if you please, with her description, spinster or widow, and residing in what parish—come, we can settle the business immediately.

Col. Quorum. Zounds! Master Janus, you are the only lawyer I ever knew in my life in a hurry to settle any business, except his bill: what signifies where and what the lady is?—probably she has no parish—perhaps she has—perhaps I may chuse to marry—and perhaps I don't chuse to marry at all.

Janus. Very true.—I remember a case, George the 1st. Strange's Reports, folio 22, page 231—if *A.* will marry *B.*—and *B.* refuses.

Col. Quorum. What the devil have I to do with *A.* being refused?—nobody has refused me.

Pickaxe. Now to be sure—why these are *strange* reports indeed, Master Janus.

D

Janus.

Janus. Just the case I was putting; for Coke very justly observes, that nobody can be married without their consent—for, says he, though the lady may be commanded after, she can't be commanded before;—and, according to Magna Charta—

Col. Quorum. According to the devil!—What, am I not one of the Bench, and don't I understand Magna Charta, and Burn's Justice, and all that, as well as you? Blood and confusion! am I to be instructed in the law of the land, and in the practice about women, at my time of life, by a pettifogging attorney?

Janus. Dear Colonel, I hope no offence—but you desired me to draw up your marriage settlement, and here it is: how should I imagine you wanted to conceal the lady's name? Besides, the law knows no concealment, except in its practice.

Col. Quorum. Why you poor, paltry, upstart, ill-looking bit of black letter, how dare you approach a man of consequence, like me, with such language? Do you recollect who I am?

Janus. Why, if you mean to insult me, I do recollect who you are. I know you are half a justice, half a soldier—that you strut about with a cockade in your hat, and a law-book under your arm.

Col. Quorum. Go on, Sir—You are but an attorney, and therefore would disgrace the vengeance of my arm.

Janus. Yes, an old gentleman too, that fancies himself in love, and thinks he is going to be married—sends for an honest attorney to draw up the settlement—and then don't know who he is to be married to.

Col. Quorum. Zounds and damnation!—but I won't swear—as I am cool, perfectly cool; but if I was not—fire and destruction! I'd break every bone about you, and convert your skin into some of your own parchment.

Janus.

Janus. I wish you wou'd—I shou'd like nothing better, as the law observes, than to see a very fine action written upon my back.

Col. Quorum. Why you little rag of a remnant of the law you—I would have said rascal, but I know what you want, and shall only call you an attorney.

Janus. That's enough: mind, you call'd me a rascal—at least you thought as much—and I'll do for you at the next assizes—Nisi prius is the word—Call an attorney a rascal, indeed! [Exit.

Col. Quorum. (in a violent passion) Here's impudence with a vengeance! the limbs of law rebelling against the body of justice—and yet there's no demanding satisfaction.—By all the—

Pickaxe. Pray, your worship, forget your indignation—consider you're a soldier.

Colonel Quorum. I do; and therefore, blood and fury! I will be reveng'd.

Pickaxe. Yes, but your honour, being a magistrate, you know, must act according to law.

Col. Quorum. (softening) True, Pickaxe, so I must—therefore I'll consult the Attorney General.

Pickaxe. It's a shame that a gentleman bearing his Majesty's commission should be so treated.

Col. Quorum. (heated) Zounds! bring me my nine-inch pistols.

Pickaxe. Lord, your worship! I meant his Majesty's commission of the peace.

Col. Quorum. Well considered, Pickaxe—so take down the Statutes at Large, and follow me with them immediately. [Exeunt.

END OF THE SECOND ACT.

A C T III.

S C E N E I.

*A Meadow.**Enter BELCOUR and LOVELESS, meeting.*

BELCOUR.

WELL, Loveless, convinc'd by your arguments,
I have at length summon'd resolution enough to
write a farewell letter to Harriot.

Loveless. Believe me, Belcour, you will applaud yourself for every resolution which tends to secure your honour and your peace.—An unworthy conquest wou'd have given you a thousand times more real sorrow, than even the surrender of your dearest wishes.

Belcour. Very likely;—but, upon my soul, I find it much less difficult to give advice than to take it.—I persuaded you to forget your Julia with great courage; but I cannot forsake this little gipsy of my own, without a thousand pangs that I blush to shew you.

Loveless. In that case, my dear friend, why forget her at all?—My advice was to forego a guilty, not an honest pursuit.—Sacrifice to a worthy and ingenuous passion the false suggestions of pride; and meet the contemptible scoffs of the ignorant and unfeeling with the real felicity of having satisfied your own heart.

Belcour. And so I would—but consider my situation—I shall incur the certain displeasure of my uncle, and the relinquishing of all his possessions.

Loveless. And what have I gain'd by the attainment of mine? What joys have wealth and splendour brought to me?—an unhappy union with a woman, whose only merits they were—and a base desertion of another, whose
ingenuous

ingenuous modesty and native charms ever would have fix'd my heart—" whose tenderness and faithful love, " wou'd have endear'd to me life's active day, and sweetly " solaced its declining years."

Belcour. O! spare me, Loveless—spare us both;—a thousand times have I reproach'd myself with writing the letter I sent this morning—but I trust to her generosity even against myself—she will not wish me, I think, to sacrifice——

Loveless. If you look upon it as a sacrifice, Belcour, I have done; I wou'd not wish her to pass her days with a man who might possibly suffer them to be embittered by regret. So let us turn our thoughts to her poor friend Louisa; there, perhaps, our endeavours may be of some service. For love, that seems to be a foe to both of us, shall there give place to friendship's surer joys.

Belcour. How unfortunate it is that I have not yet been able to discover the place of her retreat!—I know not whom to apply to, for now I have no Harriet to inform me, should she even be acquainted with it herself.

Loveless. Can't you dispatch some person to learn in what manner she left Sir Gregory's house, and whither she retired to?

Belcour. Stay, stay; if I am not mistaken, here comes one who can give us the best information—'tis she—'tis Anna.

Enter ANNA.

Anna. O dear, good Mr. Belcour—pray Sir—a word if you please.—But I beg this gentleman's pardon for being so bold.

Belcour. Speak, Anna—how does Louisa?—where is your mistress?—I have been searching for her far and near, and was this moment lamenting that I had not been able to find out her retreat.

Anna. Ah, like enough; like enough—but times are sadly altered with us since you last saw my lady at Sir

Gregory's—but I suppose, as you visit Miss Harriet every day, you know all about it.

Belcour. (confused) Indeed I do not—nor have I been there lately.

Anna. No!—Well, sure that's wonderful—pray don't think me impertinent before this gentleman—but I hope you have a regard for that young lady, as I am sure she has for you; for I have often seen her shed a power of tears, when my dear mistress only said it was possible you might forsake her.

Belcour. (confused) Did she indeed shed tears?—But you don't answer our enquiries.

Anna. Why, to be sure, we have had a sad change: and I know you wou'd pity my poor lady, and her sweet little boy too—if she leaves him, I shall be the only friend he has on earth; and my friendship, God help me! signifies little.

Loveless. (emphatically) Where is the child?—bring me to him—while I live he shall not want a father.

Anna. Well, indeed, now you are very kind; for something my lady has just heard determin'd her to leave this part of the country immediately.—She had, indeed, thought of taking a journey before, but now she talks of never seeing me again.—O Mr. Belcour! you and Miss Harriet were her friends—pray endeavour to prevent her going—I'm sure I can never bear to part with so kind and good a lady.

Belcour. Nor shall you part with her, if my interference can be of use.—My friend Loveless too shall join his entreaties to mine.

Anna. Loveless!—sure Sir, I think I have heard my lady mention such a name.

Loveless. My name!—heard your mistress mention my name!—impossible—I never was in this country before.

Anna. Well, then, perhaps I was mistaken; for I have heard her mention it but once, to complain of some such person

person—I suppose it was a relation who had used her ill—for indeed she has met with a great many enemies, and I am sure she never deserv'd one.

Loveless. Let us then haste to rescue her from further distress.

Anna. Ah! Sir!—you are very good—perhaps you have a lady and children of your own, that you love and cherish, and who have never known what it is to want a husband and a father.

Loveless. (to *Belcour*) O, *Belcour*, what pang is so severe as artless nature's undesign'd rebuke?

Belcour. Come, *Anna*, inform us where *Louisa* resides, that we may endeavour to reconcile her to her fortune and her friends.

Anna. You'll find my poor lady at the white cottage, near Colonel *Quorum's*, by the wood-side; but (I ask pardon for being so bold) I am afraid my mistress will not chuse to receive a visit from a stranger, though she may from Mr. *Belcour*.

Loveless. Don't be alarm'd, *Anna*—be assured we will neither of us impertinently intrude—but I feel moved at her distress; exasperated against the authors of it; and, as far as friendship allows, I am determined to protect her infant and herself.

[*Exeunt.*]

S C E N E II.

An apartment in LORD HECTIC's House.

Enter LADY BETTY WORMWOOD, with a letter in her hand.

Well, this is charming—who would have suspected it? Here have I found the copy of a love-letter addressed to Colonel *Quorum*—from the prudent Miss *Penelope Zodiac*, who never descends to contemplate that impra-

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per creature, a man—It seems an answer to one received from him.—The blooming maiden scorns heroics, and breathes her passion in the simple language of nature.

(Reads)

Colonel Quorum,

You request an interview—can I refuse it to a gentleman in whom I have mark'd an amiable repugnance towards the ordinary class of females, and whose conceptions, I am led to think, move in a higher sphere? Come, then, let us enjoy together a scientific communion of sentiment, in a calm exposition of the nobler faculties.

Penelope Zodiac.

Well, here's the art of love turned into science, for the sake of Colonel Quorum—one of the oldest scholars I know of. I dare say, now, if she was here, she would deny her own hand-writing. There's nothing I detest so much, as saying first one thing and then another.—Here she comes, a hypocritical creature.—My dearest friend, I have been languishing for you this half hour.

Enter Miss PENELOPE ZODIAC.

Miss Penelope. I too, my lady, have quitted my studies some time, in hopes to enjoy a little relaxed intercourse. But (*cautiously*) I hope we are not overheard—for, betwixt ourselves, I have made a little discovery that concerns you.—You know my talent—I had always a head for finding out secrets,

Lady Betty. True, Miss Penelope—I have a head for finding out secrets too—You indeed are too prudent to let any body discover your's.

Miss Penelope. Yes, I believe no person is more discreet—but to the point—You must know then, my dear Lady Betty, that odious woman, that Louisa, on being dismissed

dismissed from Sir Gregory's, has had the confidence to seat herself by Colonel Quorum.

Lady Betty. By Colonel Quorum!—Ah! I suppose she thought herself safe by the side of justice.

Miss Penelope. But she shall find herself mistaken—You shall not be imposed upon in that manner.

Lady Betty. I imposed upon, Miss Pen!—Don't be uneasy on that head—believe me, I see through the whole design.

Miss Penelope. Besides too, the Colonel is a mighty good sort of a man, and should not be led astray by so artful a minx as she is.—I cannot help disliking her, merely on your account.

Lady Betty. I perceive you can't—and am exceedingly obliged to you for the warmth you express merely on my account: but, though you wish me to be apprehensive for Colonel Quorum, upon my word I don't see the necessity for it, as I dare say he has not the least regard for any female living.

Miss Penelope. Not of a light sort, I dare be sworn—though I cannot believe he would be insensible to proper attractions—"a prudent, reserved manner, and a scientific mind.—But, after all, who knows what this forward hussy may do?

"*Lady Betty.* True, indeed; should she venture to write to him, she might consent to an interview—but that is not likely—No woman, you know, Miss Pen. could possibly think of writing to a man for such a purpose.

"*Miss Penelope.* (*smothering her vexation*) Aye—why yes, writing to a gentleman, as you say, with improper ideas—no lady could think of."—I hope she knows nothing of my letter. (*aside*)

Lady Betty. Yes, I was certain you would agree with me—however the Colonel, I believe, might be trusted:

I dare

I dare say he would laugh at any woman that was guilty of such an indiscretion—don't you think he would?

Miss Penelope. Laugh! why, no.—I mean—yes, certainly.

Lady Betty. Lord, Miss Penelope, what is the matter? You seem interested about the Colonel.

Miss Penelope. I interested about a man! Heaven forbid! I was only thinking of that Jezabel.—As for the Colonel, I believe he has too just notions of what is becoming, for your Miss to spoil.

Lady Betty. My Miss, Miss Penelope! You know I hate Misses—your Colonel, I apprehend you would say.

Miss Penelope. Mine, Lady Betty! I beg you would not insinuate that I have a Colonel, or that I would quit the sublime meditations for any Colonel upon earth; therefore, Ma'am, I insist upon it you will not Colonel me. *(walks about in a passion)*

Lady Betty. Dear Ma'am, I beg ten thousand pardons.—Indeed I could not have imagined I should have affected you so much—and, had I known your attachment to Colonel Quorum, I am sure I should have been the last person in the world to have mentioned it—for I hate being ill-natured, you know I do.—I am glad I have punished her hypocrisy. *(aside)*

Enter LOVELESS.

Loveless. Ladies, may I intreat permission to intrude?—I come in behalf of distress, to plead a female cause, and sue to you for pity:—I am told, Lady Betty, you know the unfortunate Louisa, and are not ignorant of what she has suffered from your brother's pursuits. Might I request you to be her friend?

Lady Betty. Her friend! *Me* to be her friend! Indeed I detest ill-nature, and never say an unkind word of any
body

body—otherwise I could not suppose you would have asked me such a thing for so worthless an object;—I am not, however, the person to expose my own sex, though, to be sure—one cannot help making distinctions.

Loveless. Ah, Lady Betty! And it is those cruel distinctions, which they who have fortunately never transgressed are too apt to make, that bar the entrance of virtuous society, and cut off the faint hope of repentant error. But here, I understand, there is no cause for this severity.

Miss Penelope. O to be sure not, Mr. Loveless! And so you think there is no occasion for ladies to know any thing of erudition, and logarithms, and trigonometry—they need do nothing but go about making love, and dreaming of the sensations—oh fie!—If she does not know how a lady ought to conduct herself properly, let her read Plutarch's Lives.

Loveless. But, Madam, if I am rightly informed, the conduct of Louisa is not so reproachable.—Nay, Madam, I am told there is a very respectable gentleman in the neighbourhood, a Colonel Quorum, who has made her an offer of his hand.

Miss Penelope. (alarmed, and attempting to conceal it) Sir!

Lady Betty. (astonished) Really!—Colonel Quorum offer her his hand!—Well, if some people can forget what others have done, and treat them like proper people, for my part I never can be ill-natured enough not to rejoice at it.—And I dare say Miss Penelope Zodiac will be entirely of my opinion. (sneering)

Miss Penelope. Pray—Mr. Loveless—Sir—I really speak out of regard for the lady—what was the result of it?

Loveless. As I understand, Madam, she civilly and modestly declined it.

Lady

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Lady Betty. I wish she had taken him at his word.—
I speak out of regard to the lady too—

Loveless. On this account then, though perhaps in an inferior situation, she is entitled to every respect.—If Lord Hectic therefore has an unconquerable passion, why not rise above common prejudices, and make her an offer of his hand!

Lady Betty. Sir!—My brother make Louisa an offer of his hand!

Miss Penelope. (turning to her) And really, Lady Betty, as my Lord is such a libertine—I mention it for the sake of his morals—I do not think he can do better than reform by marriage.

Lady Betty. And pray, Miss Penelope, who made you a judge, as an unmarried lady, of marriage, and reformation?—You, whose head is always among the poles?—You should not find fault, I am sure, whose disposition is so much in the milky way.

Miss Penelope. Lord, Lady Betty! I believe I find fault as little as other ladies, who know no more of delicacy and metaphysics than the Great Mogul.—A widow, a mere widow!—"next kin to an impure." (walking about angrily.)

Loveless. Ladies, I beg ten thousand pardons—I really had no intention of offending; and am exceedingly concern'd to see you both so angry.

Lady Betty. Angry, Mr. Loveless! I don't know what you mean!—I can assure you I am not angry—not at all angry; but I know when to be displeased, as well as other people.

Loveless. And you, Miss Zodiac—your philosophy at least—

Miss Penelope.—Pray, Sir, don't tantalize me—I know when a lady ought to be a philosopher, and when she ought to lay her philosophy aside.

Loveless.

A C O M E D Y.

Loveless. But, Lady Betty—should Lord Hectic himself be inclined to marry her—

Lady Betty. I beg, Sir, you will put no such indecency into his head.

Loveless. Why, Col. Quorum has absolutely offer'd himself.

Miss Penelope. Impossible!—I am sure he has a better taste for the sublime and beautiful.

Lady Betty. A peer of the realm give his hand to a wanton!

Miss Penelope. A soldier disgrace his arms with an ignoramus!

Loveless. Let me entreat you, ladies, to be more candid.

Lady Betty. Some folks are always intermeddling where they have no business.

Miss Penelope. Yes, endeavouring to steer, without knowing a point of the compass.

Lady Betty. Impertinent intrusion!

Miss Penelope. Totally in the dark, as to the effect of causes.

Loveless. Nay, ladies, I have done—I came hither to appeal to your tenderness, not to awaken your resentment.—I simply imagin'd the misfortunes of an unhappy woman wou'd have found an advocate in every female breast—but I am now convinc'd that pride is far superior to humanity, and science soars too high to have any knowledge of the trifling feelings of nature.—Ladies, your obedient. [Exit,

Lady Betty. Meddling creature!—I wish he was married a second time, for his pains.—My dear friend, Miss Penelope, that the men should imagine they could provoke us!

Miss Penelope. True, my dear friend, Lady Betty—I do flatter myself that a knowledge of the spheres, and an insight

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insight into the heavenly motions, prevent me from all earthly provocations at least.

Lady Betty. Certainly—I knew you cou'd not be so ignorant.

Miss Penelope. And I was sure you cou'd not be ill-natured.

Lady Betty. I never could be ill-natured in my life—So let's lose no time in contriving some how or other to ruin this troublesome woman, and drive her out of the neighbourhood. [Exeunt.

S C E N E III.

A Room hung with Maps, old Pedigrees, and Coats of Arms, with an old Banner over them, in Sir Gregory's House.

Enter LORD HECTIC hastily, the Captain following afterwards; Sir GREGORY with one Hand behind him, the other up to his Nose—at a slow solemn step.

Lord Hectic. Don't make any excuses to me, Sir Gregory;—you a courtier, and forget what is due to a peer, and a man of consequence!—Heh' Captain?

(turning to Swagger, who keeps at his back.)

Swagger. Aye—who has a captain to back him before and behind.

Lord Hectic. A man of nice feelings, and strong powers. *(coughing)*

Sir Gregory. Be calm, my Lord—pray be calm—and a little more ceremonious, if you please.

Lord Hectic. Don't talk to me of calmness and ceremony—don't you see that I'm in a violent passion—Heh' heh'!

Swagger. O fait, and so am I, my dear—without any ceremony at all.

Sir Gregory. It can't be, my Lord—the thing is impossible—a peer can't be in a passion—never was such a thing

thing heard of, except in the House; there, indeed, violence is a virtue, and he may say any thing.

Lord Hellic. Don't tell me of saying any thing—when I am absolutely dumb at your incivility, Sir Gregory.

Sir Gregory. I guilty of incivility!—Place and precedence, my Lord—but it is impossible.—Beau Nash himself durst not have made such a charge.

Swagger. O' my conscience then, you call turning a lady out of your house no incivility at all.

Lord Hellic. What say you to that, Sir Gregory?—do you think Beau Nash wou'd have done so?

Sir Gregory. “Fie, my Lord—the old court never
“cared who was turned out.—I should blush to see your
“lordship uneasy at the dismissal of any thing under a
“maid of honour—and they are not what they used to
“be neither.

“*Lord Hellic.* Psha! Sir Gregory, don't plague me
“about old maids of honour; give me a modern one
“—hem!—but have you no respect for the affections
“of a man of fashion?

“*Sir Gregory.* Certainly nothing pleases me more
“than to see a man of fashion in love, in a gallant and
“gentleman-like manner. But then I expect forms; no
“clandestine visits in my house. When a proper equipage
“is prepared—a number of out-riders—with an
“avant-courier—his lordship's chaplain attending—due
“notice given—and approbation asked—no man more
“ready in his place than Sir Gregory Glovetop—at the
“head of the great stairs, in point ruffles and clock'd
“stockings.

“*Lord Hellic.* What the devil, didst thou expect that
“I should have visited a lady with a dozen out-riders and
“a chaplain? acquainted all my servants that I had a
“love

"love affair upon my hands, (*coughing*) and brought my whole household to partake of it?

"*Swagger.* O yes; Sir Gregory thinks there can't be too many to partake of a good thing.

"*Lord Hestie.* Besides, didst thou imagine a beautiful creature would not be pleased with a private meeting, —There's nothing the women are so fond of as secrets.

"*Sir Gregory.* My Lord, there should be no secrets out of the cabinet; and there indeed—but I am silent." Pray, gentlemen, be cool—If Sir Clement was alive, he could only ask pardon.

Lord Hestie. And don't you expect that I should lay such a piece of family ruins in ashes, as a punishment for your audacity?

Sir Gregory. My Lord, I hope you will not forget your rank.

Swagger. O, fait, and I have no rank to forget—So as you have been so rude to the young lady, be civil to the gentleman, and give us satisfaction immediately. (*advancing nearer*)

Sir Gregory. I could not break through forms for the universe.—Single combat, to be sure, may be maintained, but always with proper decorum. You state your grievances—I reply—preliminaries are broken—and then war is declared in due course.

Swagger. Devil burn me, but we'll do as the French do—declare war without saying a syllable of the matter. So come on, Sir Gregory—By St. Patrick, I'll bother both sides of your ears with nothing but war I war! (*bel-lowing*).

Enter COLONEL QUORUM.

Col. Quorum. Peace, I say, or I'll read the riot act—

Gentlemen, your most obedient.—And now, what is the matter?

Sir Gregory. The matter is, Colonel, that I believe your coming has saved my life—though I cannot approve of this entrance into my house without ceremony, for all that.

Lord Hectic. What signifies how we came into the house; when you've turned out the most beautiful—the most exquisite—hem! hem!

Col. Quorum. I know it, all—the most accomplish'd Louisa.

Lord Hectic. To be sure, Colonel :—Egad, I thought you had taste enough to be of my opinion.—What a charming appendage she would have made in the suite of a man of fashion.

Col. Quorum. (astonished) My Lord!

Swagger. Yes, she would have been a very sweet appendage to us all.

Lord Hectic. Love, Colonel, without the galling chains of marriage—a companion for the time being, and a temporary addition to my domestic joys—hem! hem!—besides, she should have retired on a pension from the fatigues of gallantry.

Sir Gregory. Well, by my knighthood, nobody could have said that but a courtier.

Col. Quorum. And is it possible that you can be talking about the divine Louisa in this manner?—I swear that she is purer than innocence itself.—Death and desolation! was it you, Sir Gregory, who said any thing to the prejudice of Louisa's character?

Sir Gregory. I talk of character, and bred at court, Colonel! how could you imagine such a thing? I who was always called Anti-Scandal by the ladies of the bed-chamber.

E

Col.

Col. Quorum. Then, zounds, Sir! I suppose it was you who dared to hold an opinion to the prejudice of the most charming of her sex.

Swagger. O! by no means.—Upon my soul, and I have no opinion of her at all.

Col. Quorum. Then you alone, my Lord, must answer for this defamation.

Lord Heltic. Not I, indeed; I never answer for any thing.—To be sure, I do think her handsome—hem! hem!—as every man of gallantry ought—and may have paid her a few little attentions, perfectly innocent as yet.

Col. Quorum. By Heaven I believe so—but men of your lordship's turn are apt to forget, that in the eyes of the sober part of the world, those innocent attentions have the appearance of criminality, and the offer of them is sometimes as fatal as the success.

Lord Heltic. Very sententious and moral, egad!—but really, Colonel, do you expect that a man of fashion, in the heyday of youth and spirits—hem! hem!—as I am, can be stopt, in his pursuit of beauty, by a lecture on morality?

Col. Quorum. A lecture on blood and vengeance, my Lord!—for know, when those pursuits happen to be directed against the innocence which boasts a protector, balls and bombardments! that protection which my arm affords her must first be defeated.

Sir Gregory. (stalking about) I swear, by Sir Philip Sydney, the old court reviv'd again.

Lord Heltic. A challenge, as I'm a peer!—hem! hem!—but I take no advantages, Colonel; and for once you shall escape being brought upon your knees before the House for a breach of privilege.—The Captain, however, lays under no such impediment; and, being a plebeian quarrel, may enter into it with propriety.

Col.

Col. Quorum. (*advancing to the Captain*) Well, Sir, what have you to say?

Swagger. Upon my soul, Colonel, nothing at all: the very sight of a justice always binds me over to keep the peace.

Col. Quorum. My Lord—I blush to think that a nobleman, who dares wantonly sport with the character of a woman, should tremble to defend what he is not afraid to assert.

Lord Hectic. Don't provoke me, Colonel—I'm a very passionate man, I assure you.—Stand between us, Captain Swagger.

Swagger. Not I, my Lord—I'm a very passionate man too.

Col. Quorum. Contemptible evasion!

Lord Hectic. Pray don't irritate me any longer—I really may forget my rank.

Col. Quorum. Zounds and the devil!—my lord chief justice himself would be forced to swear.

Sir Gregory. (*interposing*) Pray, Colonel, be patient: consider what privileges noblemen are entitled to.

Lord Hectic. Come along, Captain—I'm indifferent about myself; you, however, have been ill treated, and I'll think of your wrongs with proper resentment.

Swagger. Fait, and that's very kind—but, if your lordship pleases, we'll forget them both as soon as we can. Mind, Colonel, if I should remember this treatment—I bear no malice, because I told you I had forgotten it. [*Exeunt both.*]

Sir Gregory. Bravo, Colonel! A second Marlborough, as I live.—No one enemy dare stand before you.

Col. Quorum. I don't know that, Sir Gregory.—Can I call those my friends who have treated Louisa unkindly? and are not you in that number? A lady for whom I have the most profound regard, and who I have

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some reason to think—but no matter.—However I did expect you would—

Sir Gregory. Don't expect me, Colonel, to negotiate any private treaties; I must be public ambassador, or nothing.

Col. Quorum. So you shall—so you shall—and pray lose no time.

Sir Gregory. Don't hurry me:

Col. Quorum. (*impetuously*) Zounds, Sir Gregory—fly this instant.

Sir Gregory. (*calmly*) Can't fly—no air balloon exploits for me.

[*Exeunt.*]

END OF THE THIRD ACT.

ACT

A C T IV.

S C E N E I.

A Wood. LOUISA'S Cottage at a Distance.

Enter LOUISA in a great agitation, looking back as she advances.

TIS impossible!—It could not be Loveless, that I discovered just now in the wood—base, perfidious man!—cruelly as he has treated me, he wou'd not come hither to insult the misery he has occasioned.—No, 'tis not in nature to be so inhuman;—besides, he is wholly ignorant of my situation.—“My eyes have certainly deceiv'd me; and my tortur'd mind, still sadly bent on former scenes, pictures resemblances where none exist.—Yes, dear fatal copy (*taking out a picture*) of him who once possessed my virgin heart; in whose false bosom all my fondest hopes were centered; and whose delusive form, in spite of all my wrongs, I cannot tear from my remembrance—let me examine thee again.”—Whoever he was, he seem'd, as I thought, in earnest discourse with Mr. Belcour—they are not yet come out from the wood—I'll endeavour to steal softly through the thicket unobserved, and get a nearer view.

[Retiring a moment.]

(Re-enter with a quick pace.)

Ah! whither shall I run?—'Tis he! 'tis the barbarous, unrelenting spoiler.—Oh! unfeeling Loveless!—After having invaded the innocence of my youth; driven me from my native, peaceful home; deprived me of a father's fond protection; and exposed me, and your help-

less infant, to all the miseries of want and shame, of persecution and contempt—you come, to complete the measure of your guilt, to rob us of the only little shed that's left us; to triumph o'er our complicated woes, and sport with agony unutterable.—Ye gracious Powers! to what am I reduc'd!—My poor brain will turn.—“But perhaps I do him injustice,—perhaps he feels.—O! no; “I will not see him—I will not endure his pity—when “I must despise his heart. (*Starts.*) Heavens!—he “advances—where, where shall I retreat to?—Alas! “the world affords me now no place to hide in!”—I'll fly then—beg, starve, do any thing, rather than bear the presence of a man I ought for ever to detest—(*Runs, looking back, then stops*) but see, they separate; and Mr. Belcour approaches alone.—I will endeavour to compose myself—shou'd he be informed of my situation, he will have learned, at least, that intentional guilt has never caused these tears to flow.

Enter BELCOUR.

Belcour. Forgive, Madam, my freedom, in thus breaking in upon your retirement: but let me hope the motive may plead for its excuse.

Louisa. (hesitating) Mr. Belcour's conduct, I flatter myself, will never need excuse. I thought I saw you with another gentleman.

Belcour. Yes, Madam, with my friend, Mr. Loveless.—He wanted much to offer his good services; but, being a stranger, wou'd not venture so far without permission; he has therefore retired for the present.

Louisa. I am easy again. (*aside*)—Mr. Belcour, I thank you for your attention—but, at present, solitude is what I seek for.

Belcour. I am aware, Madam, you may feel a repugnance in committing your cares to one so little connected with you as myself—but be assured, tho' only an acquaintance, I feel all the sympathy of friendship; and,
knowing

knowing the story of your griefs, wish sincerely to remove them.

Louisa. (*alarm'd*) Then I am lost indeed! (*aside*) What, Sir, has the gentleman, Mr. Loveless—has he communicated any thing?

Belcour. Mr. Loveless communicated, Madam!—my friend Loveless, as a man of probity and feelings, is, indeed, interested in your cause;—but he knows your sufferings only from report, nor has he communicated any thing that can give you uneasiness.

Louisa. I beg pardon, Mr. Belcour, for the supposition.—But I know the ill-nature of the world, and I thought something might have been said—that the gentleman you were with might—but perhaps I am mistaken.

Belcour. Indeed, Madam, if you knew my friend as I do—were you acquainted with the goodness of his heart, and the tenderness of his nature, you would be sensible of the high opinion he entertains of your desert.

Louisa. I hold myself obliged for the good opinion of every one.—But, Sir, we find ourselves sometimes deceived—appearances are not—however it is not for me to be interested about it.

Belcour. Believe me, he reprobates Lord Hectic's conduct as much as myself; and both of us feel for the inconvenience it has subjected you to.

Louisa. O Mr. Belcour! I have too long walked hand in hand with sorrow, to feel much concern for any inconvenience;—Lord Hectic has been troublesome to me, I own, but he is not the man that I am most apprehensive of.

Belcour. Come, Madam, assure yourself I am your friend—I see Lord Hectic's conduct has involved you in distress;—indeed I blush for the unworthiness of his sentiments.—Allow me the task of undeceiving him as to

your character, and convincing him of the impropriety of his pursuits.

Louisa. Mr. Belcour, if my Lord Hectic's sentiments were an object of consideration, there is no one I would more gladly employ in that task than yourself;—to be sure every woman of sensibility must feel for injurious suspicions;—but I have learned the lesson of submission; and, while I thank you for your attention, Sir, believe me when I assure you my distresses are of such a nature, that even your kindness can give me no relief.

Belcour. To be sure, Madam, my fortune at present is narrow, tho' my good wishes towards you are unbounded;—but I am certain Mr. Loveless, whose mind is enlarged as his circumstances are ample, will gladly supply every deficiency.

Louisa. Excuse me, Sir—want of fortune is not what I allude to;—but were it so, and rigid penury now stared me in the face,—nothing shou'd induce me to apply there for succour.

Belcour. Were you acquainted with my friend, I am certain you wou'd alter your opinion;—his desire to serve you is founded on the noblest principles,—for he is a man, Madam, who, softened by misfortunes of his own, is alive only to the calamity of others.—He has conversed with your servant Anna; has seen your little boy, is charmed with his artless looks and infant prattle; and has commissioned me to request you would commit the care of his youth, and the establishment of his fortune, to his protection and regard.

Louisa. Did he take notice of my boy?—O nature, how powerful is thy force!—The mother at this moment almost cancels all the past (*aside*)—Excuse these tears, Sir;—a parent's grateful tribute for her only child.

Belcour. Yes, Madam, your son too was equally struck with his attention—sat on his knee, threw his
little

little arms about his neck—embraced him—called him father, and said that you wou'd thank him for them both.

Louisa. O Sir!—Your description is more than I can support.

Belcour. Shall I bring Mr. Loveless to you, Madam? I can easily overtake him, and he will repeat in person the sentiments that do honour to his heart. (*going.*)

Louisa. O, no, Sir—not for the world—I cou'd not bear it.—For myself, my sojourn here will be but short—for my child, tell him 'tis his—I bequeath him to his care: may he regard him with a parent's fondness, and may my boy return it with a filial duty!

Enter HARRIET behind.

Harriet. Louisa in close conference with Mr. Belcour!

Belcour. Rest assured, Madam, that your interest will always be near my heart.

Harriet. (*aside.*) Heavens! what do I hear?

Louisa. (*weeping.*) Forgive, Mr. Belcour, that affliction which my situation naturally produces;—I must leave this place for ever—I feel too for Harriet, I know she loves me, and I fear her gentle heart will break—indeed I am grateful for your attentions; but it is on a subject on which you will not take it amiss if I endeavour to conceal my tears. [*Exit.*]

Belcour. I conjure you, Madam, to allow me—to hear me. By Heaven there is a something in that woman that interests me—I must follow her, and endeavour to persuade her to look for happier days. [*Exit.*]

Harriet. (*coming forward*) Can I believe my senses?—can that be Louisa?—the partner of my bosom, who shar'd my confidence—to whose sorrows I gave all my pity?—This then was the story she could not reveal to me without blushing; well might she avoid my enquiries—the cause of Belcour's unkind letter to me is now fully

fully explained;—Louisa was the sacrifice he could not make—ah! treacherous friend! If such is the treatment we are to expect from those we most esteem, where shall our affections be placed? [Exit.

S C E N E II.

An Apartment in LORD HECTIC'S House.

Enter Lady BETTY WORMWOOD, followed by JANUS.

Lady Betty. But now, my dear Mr. Janus, you know my regard for propriety; and therefore, notwithstanding I cannot help feeling for the unhappy wretches of my own sex, yet we must have this creature, who has captivated my brother's affections, removed out of the neighbourhood, no matter how, and I shall depend upon your ingenuity for doing it.

Janus. (bowing) True, my Lady—Burn, in his chapter about nuisances, does mention the women; but I don't recollect he says they can be removed whether they will or no—can your Ladyship remember a case in point?

Lady Betty. Pooh! Mr. Janus, how should I remember cases?—I want your assistance; and you must stretch a point as far as you can, to oblige me.—The law, you know, is a wide field.

Janus. It is so, my Lady—it is so—and I don't mind going a little about the edges of it;—but totally to trespass might put me upon the Black List.—However, I'll look into the Attorney's Guide, and see what I can do.

Lady Betty. Come, come, Mr. Janus, I know you are a man of integrity, and honest people have their scruples;—but here is the attorney's guide—take and examine it (*giving him a purse*);—and tho' you should act a little against (*he puts out his hand to take it*) the letter, yet, in equity, you wou'd undoubtedly be justified:

Janus.

Janus. Why, to be sure, your ladyship has set the matter in a new light.—I had forgot equity totally;—and really I can't help seeing it now in the light of a conspiracy against your brother.—I remember a case in the rebellion of forty-five—John Jones versus Sandy Maclean—

Lady Betty. (interrupting) True, true, good Mr. Janus—I perceive you begin to feel the weight of my argument—it certainly is a conspiracy against my brother's person, as well as his fortune; and therefore she must on no account be suffered to come near his house.—I think you see the case just as you should do—do me the favour of accepting this (*gives a bank note*).

Janus. (taking it) Yes, yes, my Lady—I know where to put my finger; and you may rest assured, on the faith of an attorney, the plaintiff shall be nonsuited, and her cause kicked out of court—she shall never get into my Lord's house whilst I live, and in two days she shall be fifty miles from the place.—But hold, my Lady—there is one difficulty has just struck me—there is another attorney in the parish—

Lady Betty. Well, Mr. Janus,—what of that?

Janus. Why, my Lady, I think we had better have him likewise. Two of us, I think, will finish the business.—Suppose your Ladyship gives me his retaining fee.

Lady Betty. Well, well, Mr. Janus—only spare my feelings, and get the jade removed by fair or foul means, and I shan't mind a little expence.

Janus. Oh! my Lady, two attornies!—only think of that, and you need not despair of any means whatever.

Lady Betty. Soft—I see my brother coming this way—you must not mention my having been here for the world, or the subject of our discourse—only remember the business.

[*Exit.*
Janus.]

60 THE REPARATION:

Janus. Yes, yes, depend upon me—as I have made sure of the principal evidence. (*pocketing the purse*)

Enter LORD HECTIC.

Lord Hectic. Ha! my little attorney! what the devil art thou pocketing there so hastily—thy conscience?

Janus. (confused) No, my Lord, no—thank Heaven, I am not ashamed of my conscience—I only took the liberty of stepping in to enquire after your Lordship's health—I am delighted to see you look so charmingly.

Lord Hectic. I dare say thou art—especially as thou wilt get nothing by my death.—But thou art come most luckily, my little vellum-blotter—for I want thy assistance;—thou know'st the woman I was mentioning to thee the other day—

Janus. Yes, yes, my Lord, the lady that was at Sir Gregory Glovetop's—

Lord Hectic. The same—hem! hem!—the thought of her warms me. Now I am told she is about to leave this country immediately—

Janus. Really, my Lord—I am prodigiously sorry for it.—This is lucky!—I shall carry her ladyship's cause without bringing it to a trial. (*Aside*)

Lord Hectic. But, as such a circumstance would annihilate my hopes, that must be prevented immediately; and therefore thou must exert all thy ingenuity to keep her in the neighbourhood—

Janus. My Lord! to be sure, if your Lordship wishes it; but how can an attorney prevent a lady from following her inclinations?

Lord Hectic. Why, you must know, on her leaving that old fool, Sir Gregory, she has become, without knowing it, tenant to a little cottage of mine, which I learned this morning from my steward—and therefore, on some pretence or other, I would have such difficulties thrown in

in the way, as may prevent her putting her design in execution.

Janus. Aye—payment of rent; which, being an exceeding neat house, may be exorbitant—

Lord Hectic. True—then she may perhaps think of a personal application to me—I step in, and become her guardian angel at once.—You take the matter, heh?

Janus. Yes, I remember a case——

Lord Hectic. Damn your cases—pocket that (*throws a purse*) and fly to execute my plan.

Janus. (*going, and returns*) I do.—She shall be safe in your Lordship's house in less than two hours—but, my Lord, the ladies of a family you know are a little inquisitive, sometimes—Now, as I have the honour of transacting business for your Lordship's sister, I hope she will not know a syllable of what I undertake for your Lordship—

Lord Hectic. Oh! I see thou art an honest fellow, and stand up for thy character.

Janus. I do—I do, my Lord—My father always said I was too honest to thrive.

Lord Hectic. In your profession he meant—but hold, is not there another honest gentleman of your calling in this parish?—You must take care that Louisa gets no advice about our proceedings—for I do not imagine they will be strictly legal.

Janus. Never fear him, I have him under my thumb here. (*putting his hand on his pocket*)—Besides, the gentlemen in our way are very honourable, and never betray each other.

Lord Hectic. Then there's that fighting Colonel must be taken care of, for he's too honourable by half—and is such an old fool, that he actually wants to marry her, with his infirm constitution—Hem! hem!

Janus. Does he so?—Oh, oh! That's the blank he

wants to fill up, is it?—I am glad I shall be able to vex him—don't be afraid of his worship, my Lord—I have all my life been used to counteract justice.

Lord Hectic. Then lose not a moment, for I am all impatience to enjoy the fruits of thy industry;—and hem! hem!—the devil take this cough, I say. *[Exit.*

JANUS alone.

Well, this is a good morning's walk—to satisfy one's interest and one's revenge at the same time, by securing the principal evidence on both sides the question—and I think we need not fear being cross-examined.—I am glad his lordship has employed me in this business, otherwise I must have obeyed her ladyship; but when one is engaged on both sides, one can satisfy one's conscience, and take that which is most agreeable. *[Exit.*

S C E N E III.

Miss PENELOPE ZODIAC'S Dressing-Room; she sitting at a Table, with a Letter in her Hand.

I think this is the time Colonel Quorum requested an interview; and it would be exceedingly rude not to be punctual with military gentlemen.—Besides, with what a polite warmth he writes—‘I die with impatience to thank you for your condescension, which I am now reading from your fair hand.’—Yes, yes, I certainly have struck him, notwithstanding the reports about that creature Louisa.—If he should press me, I must relent, however, with a proper cruelty.

Enter Servant to announce the Colonel.

Miss Penelope. Shew him in—shew him in.

Enter COLONEL QUORUM, (bowing very low.)

Col. Quorum. Dear Madam, forgive my eagerness to express

press my sense of your kindness.—I should have address'd myself, in the first place, to Lady Betty, as having the honour of a greater intimacy; but Miss Penelope Zodiac has a heart as amiable as her person, and will forgive the intrusion of a soldier and a magistrate, who comes to her as a tender suppliant.

Miss Penelope. Lord, Colonel, you put me quite in a flutter.—I should be sorry to refuse Colonel Quorum any proper request—but—

Col. Quorum. Be not alarm'd, dear Miss Penelope.—Col. Quorum, I am bold to say, wou'd not abuse the kindness of any Lady; and you, Madam, will allow for the feelings of a man in love.—If I can but persuade her to interest herself for me with Louisa, it wou'd go a great way. (*aside*)

Miss Penelope. Yes, I see how it is. (*aside*)—I beg, Sir, you will be seated (*both sit*):—and so, Colonel, I think you said you was in love.—Girls, indeed, are fond of coquetting—but a sensible woman scorns to give unnecessary pain.—I assure you I feel for your situation.

Col. Quorum. Ah, Madam, you, who are so kind, wou'd pardon my warmth, if you were sensible of the charms of her whom I adore.

Miss Penelope. O, Sir, I am afraid you do but flatter me.—

Col. Quorum. Rather, Madam, say you flatter me—but, to be plain, tho' a friend to the sister, you may, perhaps, be ignorant of the libertine principles of Lord Hectic.

Miss Penelope. Truly, Colonel, I am no stranger to them.—Indeed I have often thought, though only a visitor, a kind of satellite, as I may call myself, in these regions, that I'm not entirely safe in the house.

Col. Quorum. O Madam, you wou'd really be alarm'd, if you knew the designs he is capable of forming.

Miss Penelope. How, Colonel!—you frighten me to death

death.—I won't stay another night within his atmosphere.—Oh, Colonel, it is on these occasions a single lady wants most a protector.

Col. Quorum. True, Madam;—and Col. Quorum; when he is not bound to keep the peace, does not want the spirit to protect any lady;—but how mortifying it wou'd be, if those efforts were disregarded, and his attentions were of no avail! (*in a tender accent.*)

Miss Penelope. And cannot you, who are a soldier; read any thing from the eyes—the manner that approves, though it says nothing.

Col. Quorum. How good you are!—would you but deign to unite your interest with mine.

Miss Penelope. O, Colonel, pray support me—I'm in a strange taking.

Col. Quorum. Dearest Madam, will you then consent to my proposal?—Will you espouse my cause?

Miss Penelope. Heavens!—how my heart beats.

Col. Quorum. (*more earnest*) Say, dearest Madam, that you will be the mistress of my fate on this occasion.

Miss Penelope. Well, Colonel, I relent—I am yours.

Col. Quorum. (*kissing her hand*) I am transported—

Miss Penelope. (*looking tenderly*) But will you be so always, when you become my husband, Colonel?

Col. Quorum. (*starting up*) Madam!

Miss Penelope. Yes, Colonel, I see you are surprised at my kindness—perhaps some women would have been more cruel.

Col. Quorum. Dear Madam, I fear we misunderstand each other.—By Heaven I cannot but be sensible of the honour you have done me—but, in truth, my heart is engaged to one in whose interest I hoped to have made you a partaker—the divine Louisa.

Miss Penelope. (*starting up*) What! and have you been deceiving

deceiving me into a passion all this time, and seducing me into an unsuspected avowal of regard, merely to play upon me?

Col. Quorum. Dearest Madam—be pacified.

Miss Penelope. And is it thus you impose upon young ladies?—Fie for shame.—You a soldier, and a justice!

Col. Quorum. But, Miss Penelope, by all that's military and legal, I am most heartily sorry for the mistake.

Miss Penelope. Mistake, Sir! don't call it mistake—Did you not write to me?—Did you not talk of my fair hands?—Have you not, you audacious fellow?

Col. Quorum. (in a passion) Zounds and perdition!—but I am temperate.

Miss Penelope. Sir, I insist upon your seeing me no more.

Col. Quorum. I obey.—Military gentlemen seem born to distress the ladies—but, as a magistrate, I ought not to be a disturber of the peace. [Exit.

Miss Penelope. Well, this is a shock indeed to my first passion, and requires all the philosophy I am mistress of.—But, thank Heaven, nobody knows it but myself.

[Exit.

S C E N E IV.

A small room in LOUISA's cottage—a table, with paper, ink, &c.

LOUISA with a letter.

When will relentless Fortune cease its persecutions! this is indeed a cruel aggravation of my sorrows (*looking at the letter*) to be accused by my Harriet of having seduced the affections of her Belcour, whom, she tells me, she has lost for ever:—"to reproach me in terms
"the most resentful, and tear a bleeding bosom with the
"sharpest poignard of unkindness—yet I forgive her—

F

" too

“too well I know how severe a trial it is to lose that
“object on whom our first affections have been placed”
—before I go, I will unfold to her my fatal story, and
convince her how impossible it is that I, the child of
woe, the victim of sensibility, could have been guilty of
such baseness.

Enter ANNA.

Anna. Madam, the chaise is ready—but, oh! my dear,
my honoured lady—let me again entreat.—

Louisa. Anna, I must leave you—I cannot however
bear a formal parting—you know, and will remember my
wishes—take my boy in your hand, and, together with
this packet, wait upon Mr. Loveless.

Anna. Yes, my dear lady—but perhaps there will be
no occasion—I met Mr. Loveless just now.

Louisa. What is it you mean?

Anna. Pray don't be angry with me—but he seemed
so pressing, I told him where you lived, and he promis'd
to call upon you directly.

Louisa. (*more alarmed*) Promis'd to call upon me!

Anna. I hope, Madam, you are not offended—but
indeed he was so kind to the child, and enquir'd so ten-
derly after you. (*knocking at the door*)—O Madam, there
he is—and to be sure he is the civillest best gentleman—
I am certain you'll be glad to see him. [*runs out.*]

Louisa. (*greatly agitated*) What now remains for me?
—Fate thou hast done thy worst; the deepest woes, the
purest intentions, could not avert thy rigour. I would
have saved my child from shame—I would have sought
my father's humble roof, and then in some obscure cor-
ner have implored his leave to linger out the little rem-
nant of my days—O nature support me—he is coming.

Enter

Enter JANUS.

Janus. Madam, your most obedient—I beg you will not be surpriz'd at my appearance—tho' I am a stranger, I'm quite a gentleman, I assure you, Madam.

Louisa. Sir, pray Sir—to what cause am I indebted for the honour of this visit?—I am indeed unacquainted with your person.

Janus. Perhaps so—but I believe I'm as well known at the quarter-sessions as most people—I have the honour to be an attorney, and to manage the concerns of my Lord Hectic—I think you are acquainted with his Lordship—he is a most amiable man, I assure you.

Louisa. It may be so, Sir—but I hope you will not think me impertinent in saying, I have particular business at present.—Should Loveless come—(*aside*)

Janus. And so have I—I like business of all things, and do a great deal for his Lordship: no offence, I hope.

Louisa. Pray, Sir, be kind enough not to trouble me about Lord Hectic, or any *other* person.

Janus. Certainly not, Ma'am—never give trouble without shewing cause.—Really now this is a pretty genteel house you have got into—very neatly furnish'd indeed—I dare say you must pay very handsomely for it—belongs, I think, to Lord Hectic;—no offence, I hope—but his Lordship is rather a punctual man, and apt to enquire about rents—never suffers a tenant to quit the premises till all is discharged.

Louisa. Well, Sir, if this house does belong to Lord Hectic—of which I was ignorant, or, on many accounts, I should not have entered its doors—I have left orders to discharge faithfully all my debts—however there's what will satisfy you (*offers him money*) in the mean time, I beg you will no longer bar my passage. (*going*)

Janus. (interrupting her) Dear Madam, I hope you will not think of it—besides, I can't give a proper receipt, I have no stamps—My Lord loves to settle these matters himself.

Louisa. Sir, I insist upon freedom in my own house—I hope you will not think of stopping me—I beg, Sir, I may pass.

Janus. (stopping her) Yes, Madam—I remember a case—2d of Charles the 1st.—

Louisa. O Heavens! if Loveless shou'd now enter! *(aside)*—What, Sir, is your breast incapable of sympathy? Have you no compassion for the sorrows of an helpless female?

Janus. Aye, 2d of Charles the 1st.—as I said—there was a negro-woman that had got into a house—

Louisa. Do you then mean to insult me? O Providence!—but I submit to thy decrees—and is there no one to feel for my affliction?

Janus. Yes, Madam, to be sure—wait upon Lord Hectic, and the whole will be settled immediately.

Louisa. Wait upon Lord Hectic, Sir!—there is no house on earth I would not sooner go to—no place so terrible, except the present—Heavens! I shall run distracted.

Janus. Pray, Madam, don't hesitate.

Enter ANNA hastily.

Anna. My dear lady, I'm so glad—Mr. Loveless is coming across the meadow, and will be here in a few minutes.

Louisa. (falling on her knees) O Sir, on my knees let me implore your pity—'tis not pecuniary relief I want—take twice the sum that I am indebted—'tis an unhappy woman, torn with ten thousand agonizing pangs, that kneels for your compassion, and only begs permission to retire

retire—I would not for the world be seen by Mr. Loveless.

Janus. Not seen by Mr. Loveless—some former keeper, I suppose; it will be as well to take advantage of this discovery. (*aside*)—Rise, Madam, I would not for the world you should be caught—you may depend upon my silence—there's no occasion to declare the whole truth, you know, unless one's sworn in court—so, Madam, as your chaise is at the door, we can pop into it, and drive to my Lord's together; for *we must* have your discharge from himself.

Louisa. (rising) I see, Sir, you are inexorable.

Janus. Yes, Ma'am, very conscientious in the discharge of my duty.

Louisa. To go there is dreadful—to stay here is ruin.—Lead on, Sir—I can brave any shock but this.

Janus. (going out) Gad, this distress is very fortunate—I should never have carried my point without it.

[*Exit.*]

Louisa. (to Anna, who is following) Tarry a while, my Anna—and tell the stranger, when he comes to hear how rudely I have been driven from this last and only shelter—tell him, that Louisa's wrongs, her ceaseless anguish, and her shorten'd life, will one day rise in dreadful evidence against the cruel author of them all. [Exit.]

END OF THE FOURTH ACT.

THE REPARATION:

A C T V.

S C E N E I.

A Saloon in LORD HECTIC's House.

Enter LOVELESS, much agitated.

YES, the distinction is just, and I feel its force—guilty as I have been, dare I revolt against any epithet of reproach which the father of my Julia here bestows upon me?—Yes, I *have* outrag'd the peace of an innocent family, and call'd Heaven to witness the violation of its own rites. Can I then oppose myself against the life of a parent, whose wrongs already rise beyond redress? I shudder at the thought.

Enter BELCOUR.

Oh, my friend, excuse the haste with which I sent to you—indeed your presence is most welcome.

Belcour. My dear Loveless, I instantly obey'd your summons—but say, explain to me the cause of this emotion.

Loveless. (*giving a letter*) Read that—and you will know.

Belcour reads.

Sir,

The offer of a pecuniary recompence I treat with the contempt it merits, because I find how deeply I have been injured. While I look'd upon my child as a wanton, who yielded to the solicitation, the dishonourable

nourable solicitation, of a pretended lover, I held her cause beneath the dignity of a soldier's arm; an arm worn in the honourable service of his country, never sullied in the defence of infamy and shame—but when I learn, for the first time, she has been betray'd by a pretended solemnization of marriage, and that she has fallen a victim to that fraud, and my unjust displeasure; every remembrance of my unhappy child now upbraids the tardiness of my arm—old as I am—and sinking beneath the pressure of my woes, I have *flown* to this spot; and shall only add, that I expect you an hour hence, at the outskirts of the grove.

Frederic Hardy.

Loveless. (*taking back the letter*) Well—is he not right?

Belcour. The warmth of a parent is natural, and ought to be excused. You, however, must not be provok'd at it—meeting him would be impossible.

Loveless. Why, so I have thought—but then, my friend, can I submit to epithets, under which no man ought to live?—Should he stigmatize me as a coward, will the world make allowances for my situation, or believe that he is the only man on earth I would not meet?

Belcour. And would you then so far comply with the false idea which that world calls honour, as to raise your arm against a man already too much injured?

Loveless. Mistake me not—I have no such intention—I have been the aggressor; and 'tis proper, if such is the reparation he wishes, that I shou'd abide its consequence—yes, I will meet him—but without resistance—I shall offer myself a willing victim to his resentment.

Belcour. Well, Loveless, if such are your resolutions, let me at least go with you—perhaps it may be in my power to convince Captain Hardy, that, notwith-

standing the savage practice we see every day enforced, a duel never yet afforded a recompence for a wrong—life may be taken, but satisfaction will not be obtained: and I submit it to every thinking man, who has unfortunately been led into such a situation, whether, the moment revenge was complete, peace of mind was not destroyed? I must insist, therefore, on being permitted to attend you.

Loveless. No, Belcour, that painful task let me excuse you: in these cases an indifferent man is best; for, though it be the task of a friend, it is the last office he should undertake. On this occasion I mean to ask the kindness of Lord Hectic—his sensibility will not suffer as an acquaintance.

Belcour. Unkind Loveless! And can you imagine I shall suffer less, because I am not present?

Loveless. Pray spare me. (*as going*)—One thing, however, I wish to mention—Should any thing happen, should this be the last time I embrace my friend, the father of my Julia will still find I have not forgotten him. The bulk of my fortune, however, you will be the heir to—if therefore a wish for your Harriet still hangs about your heart, let my last request enforce your own application, for her to share it with you.

Belcour. I am overpower'd by your goodness.

Loveless. One thing more—I have taken the liberty of leaving a small bequest to the lady in whose cause we have interested ourselves: and, according to my promise, have secured the independency of her son. Should she wonder why a stranger has been thus attentive to her concerns, inform her of my story, and tell her it was the peace-offering of a man who had once injured the purest of female excellence.

[*Exit hastily.*]

BELCOUR,

BELCOUR. (*solus*)

Generous Loveless! Be it mine, in return for thy friendship, to prevent any advantage I might receive from thy misfortune.—Poor Harriet! Loveless would use thee tenderly—but I have treated thee with unkindness. She now suspects me of an unworthy attachment to her once-loved friend Louisa, and bitterly upbraids us both:—let me then haste to undeceive her; and, regardless of worldly considerations, lay my erring heart at her feet, and rely upon the tenderness of her's to pardon and accept it, [Exit.

S C E N E II.

A cabinet in LORD HECTIC's house, hung round with pictures of ladies. One frame empty. He surveying them with a pocket-glass, and dusting them with his pocket-handkerchief.

Lord HECTIC.

A man of fashion should patronize the arts; and therefore, whenever I succeed with a lady, I always have her picture drawn; by which means I encourage painting, and perpetuate my own achievements. (*Looking at the empty frame*) I must have that vacancy though filled up; I ordered the frame, I think, when I first conceived a passion for Louisa;—hem!—It will really sully, if I am not happy in a short time.

Enter SWAGGER.

Swagger. What the devil can you mean by poring over a trumpery frame, that you intend to make into a picture,

picture, though upon my shoul the original will never come after the copy?

Lord Hectic. What the devil art thou talking about? Why thou art drunk—absolutely drunk.

Swagger. Faith! and I am no such thing, honey!—I am as so—ber as any gentleman ought to be, that is a soldier, d'ye see.—So I tell you now, in sober sadness, you may give up all thoughts of Madam Louisa, for she has fixed her sweet affections upon another person.

Lord Hectic. Hem! hem! (*coughing*)—You really have choaked me:—fix'd her affections upon another!—what?—Whom do you mean?—how?—when?—where?

Swagger. Where!—why about two yards and a half from you. If you look straight to me, you can't miss seeing him.

Lord Hectic. Why, Captain Swagger! thou hast surely forgotten whom thou art speaking of—and what thou art saying.

Swagger. O, to be sure! and I am to blame if she has fixed her affections, as I said, upon a sober gentleman-like person called Captain Swagger!

Lord Hectic. Upon thee—thou animal!

Swagger. Yes, by St. Patrick! for when I went there, just to speak a few words in your favour—Oh, says she, Captain (with a smile that quite bother'd me) how can you waste your time thus, when perhaps I may have disposed of my heart to another?—*Another!*—Upon my shoul, and I take these things as quick as any man in all England.

Lord Hectic. Drunk—absolutely drunk.

Enter JANUS, and whispers LORD HECTIC.

Louisa coming to wait upon me!—hem! hem!

Janus.

Janus. Yes, only a little timorous, as she is afraid of some former keeper, who has discovered her.

Lord Hætic. You overcome me with gratitude, my dear friend;—twist yourself out immediately, and drive that cousin of mine before you.

Janus. Come, Captain, as you seem very clear-headed, suppose you retire to study a little in my Lord's library. (*showing him*)

Swagger. Well, well, I will go and study—but I am the most complaisant crater in the world, to leave a room when a woman is in love with me. (*Janus pushes him out*)

Lord Hætic. Hem! hem!—Upon my word this unexpected visit has a little deranged my nerves.—Where the devil is my tincture of sage, to give me confidence?

Enter LOUISA.

Louisa. My Lord, you will doubtless be surprized at so extraordinary a visit, from one whose misfortunes alone are all she has to plead—misfortunes which your Lordship has (I hope unintentionally) very considerably increased. Depressed with cureless griefs, and nearly yielding to a sad despondency, I had found one kind asylum, I had secured one tender friend:—friendship and privacy, the only consolations I could feel, your Lordship's importunities have deprived me of—but I cannot, will not, suppose your heart has consented to such injurious conduct—and therefore have determined to make this personal appeal to your compassion.

Lord Hætic. Really, upon my word, you did very right.—She begins in heroics, I see—a certain sign she'll come down. (*aside*)—Pray, Madam, be seated.

Louisa. I beg, my Lord, we may wave attentions—I have already too much reason to complain of yours.

Lord Hectic. My dear Madam, I hope not—I shou'd be the most mortified creature breathing.

Louisa. A person who informs me he acts for your lordship, has subjected me to great inconvenience; it is in your power to oblige me most essentially—There is a gentleman—I hope I may speak with confidence—nobody can break in upon your lordship?

Lord Hectic. O, not a soul—however I'll take the precaution of locking the door.—Yes, I see the frame will soon be filled up. (*returns from the door*)—You may depend upon it, Madam, we are safe. I am exceedingly nice about a lady's reputation, and never mention a thing afterwards.

Louisa. Let me then hope you will put a stop to the injustice which your lawyer has been guilty of in your name.

Lord Hectic. O dear, madam, never mind—you know what an attorney is, and won't be surprized at any thing he does.

Louisa. Indeed I imagined his conduct wou'd never meet with your concurrence; and some reasons, peculiar to my fortune and situation, making my immediate retreat necessary, I was induced to take this step—perhaps too forward—that I might not suffer the delays of impertinence, or the insults of mean power.—From your lordship, notwithstanding former mistakes, I trusted a helpless female would find security and redress.

Lord Hectic. Without doubt, Madam—I assure you you are quite safe—pray do not rise—nothing can be more snug. (*knock*)—(*aside*) What the devil is that? (*starting up.*)

Louisa. (rising) I beg, my Lord, you will use no ceremony—I would not be seen for the world—I can retire

the other way.—Here is the full amount of my debt.

(going.)

Lord Hectic. Pray, Madam—I request, I entreat (*knocking*)—Zounds! was ever nobleman so interrupted?

Loveless. (*without*) My Lord, I ask your pardon—

Louisa. O Heavens Loveless's voice (*aside.*)

Lord Hectic. Don't be alarmed—it is only a gentleman, whom you don't know—a visitor of mine—a queer formal sort of fellow—Do me the favour only to step into that room, I'll turn him out again in an instant.

Loveless. (*without*) Pray, my Lord, let me speak to you.

Lord Hectic. (*calling to him*) In a minute, Loveless—in a minute.

Louisa. What shall I do?—Should he discover me in this situation, how dreadful will it be! (*going towards the apartment.*) Let me entreat you not to mention my name, or even hint that a lady is here.

Lord Hectic. Certainly not, Ma'am—I'm the most careful man about a lady's reputation. (*shows her into the other room*)—Damn this fellow's interruption; what can he want, an impertinent rascal? (*opens the door.*)—My dear friend, I am very glad to see you—but how the devil could you interrupt a man at such a crisis?

Loveless. I beg your pardon, my Lord, if I have intruded—but the case would not admit of delay—I must request your attention for a moment to a very disagreeable business.

Lord Hectic. I am sorry for it—but I can attend to nothing now, but very pleasant business.—Betwixt ourselves, there is a lady in the other room—but she desired me not to speak of it—You understand me—when a lady's in the case—hem!—hem!

Loveless. I acknowledge the privilege—but in one word

word then, I am unfortunately involved in an affair of honour, and must request your assistance.

Lord Hectic. Zounds! how can I think of an affair of honour, when I have got a fine woman waiting for me—or what wou'd she think of me, if I did?—why, I tell you its the handsome widow that I was mentioning, that you and Belcour were moralizing about—had not you unfortunately broke in upon me—the day had been mine already.

Loveless. Really!—Louisa a wanton!—then, indeed, I've been deceived—

Lord Hectic. That may be—but I am never deceiv'd about the women. When I pursue, I always succeed.—Look at these pictures, they are my trophies—that frame will soon be filled up—Louisa's ready to fit; pop her in in a week:—but I don't speak out of vanity,—So now, my dear friend, damn your duel, and turn yourself out as quick as you can.

Loveless. Well, my Lord, I will wait your leisure.—Success is the parent of levity, and therefore I excuse yours.—Unthinking Louisa! thus to sacrifice thyself.—Had the angel whom I deceiv'd but resembled thee, how short would have been my regret! (*aside*) [Exit.

Lord Hectic. (*going to the door of the inner room*) Well, all is safe, my dame of Ephesus—that damn'd fellow is gone. (*Louisa comes out*) Come, don't be frighten'd, my angel—Lord Hectic is protection itself—hem! hem!

Louisa. Thank Heaven, it is past—and now, since I can depart with security, let me not again run the risk of subjecting myself and your lordship to the impertinence of suspicion.—I wish you a good day. (*going*)

Lord Hectic. Pray, Ma'am—I beg Ma'am, you will compose yourself;—I could not think of letting you go so—so fright'ned and flurried as you must have been!—that
curled

curfed fellow, who has no more nerves than a porter—
pray fit down and compofe yourfelf, my love.

(Offering to take her hand.)

Louifa. I hope, my Lord, you will give no reafon to alter the favourable opinion I had begun to form of your humanity; or to repent the refolution, which led me, in a moment of diftrefs, to fly to your Lordfhip for protection.

Lord Heltic. Come, come, my dear Madam, you excel in heroics, and I love them at proper times; but ladies don't vifit gentlemen for nothing.—I am a man of fafhion and pleafure!—hem! hem!—and I am ambitious to fee you at the head of both:—fo come, throw afide this—this unneceffary referve. *(Seizing her hand.)*

Louifa. Free my hand, my Lord, this inftant—or, by all that's facred, I'll alarm the family.

Lord Heltic. Oh dear! my family are alarmed at nothing;—come, Ma'am, tafte and happinefs are in your reach—a neat houfe in London—four ponies for Hyde-park—confent, my angel—nay, you muft—you fhall—

[Attempts to be rude, ſhe ſcreams, and Lovelefs ruſhet in; on which ſhe faints, and falls.]

Lord Heltic. Why what the devil brings you back again, Lovelefs? don't you fee the lady faints at the fight of you?

Lovelefs. *(goes up to her)* Gracious Powers! what miracle is this? can it be poffible?—can it be my Julia whom I fee *(raifes her)* in fuch a fituation?—Speak! breathe! look! and relieve my agonizing doubts!—My Lord, my Lord, what excuſe can you make?—Revive, my adored Julia, and explain this myſtery.

Lord Heltic. Egad, I have got into the wrong box; and I may as well get out of it as ſoon as I can. *(afide)*—Well, Mr. Lovelefs, if this is really your Julia, as you call her—I never trefpaſs upon any gentleman's property,
and

and therefore—hem!—I have the honour to wish you a good morning. [Exit.]

Loveless. (*striving to raise her*) And yet, to be found with a man of Lord Hectic's character!—My love! my wife! my long-lost Julia!—assure yourself you are in the hands of a man who would die to protect you—in the arms of your Loveless.

Louisa. (*starting*) Loveless! Oh! (*breaking from him*) too well I recollect that name! the fatal, fatal cause of all my sufferings!

Loveless. Let me thank Heaven that thou art still alive!

Louisa. Yes, I am alive—inhuman Loveless! alive to every wretchedness thy cruelty has heap'd upon me!—betray'd by thee, in youth's unguarded morn—I have liv'd the scorn of my sex, and the sport of your's.

Loveless. I have indeed been guilty.

Louisa. My first, my tenderest love being basely sacrificed to sordid interest and mean ambition, I have been forced, with the keen pangs of wounded sensibility, to bear the weight of undeserv'd reproach.

Loveless. Oh! spare me, Julia—look on me as I am, an alter'd man—peace has been a stranger to my bosom, and remorse and sorrow my constant companions, since we parted.—My heart is open but to the charms of virtue, and trembles only at the uncertainty of yours.

Louisa. My child, thy much-wrong'd child, too cruel man! who now must blush to own his birth, but for thy treachery would have smil'd upon our mutual happiness, and rais'd his infant voice to bless his father.

Loveless. Yes, Madam, I feel, severely feel the justice of your complaints! yet I could urge some heart-felt sighs, I could bring witnesses of some repentant tears, tears which hourly trickled down my cheek, when I thought the injured excellence, whose memory made
them

them flow, had long been lost to every earthly recompence.—I lov'd my boy, before I knew he was so. I felt for his mother's wrongs, when I could little suppose myself the sad aggressor.

Louisa. Loveless, 'tis now too late to parley—you may awaken remembrance; you can never restore my peace.

Loveless. I am distracted with a thousand thoughts—I destroy'd thy innocence; yet dread to find it wanting—tell me then, in pity tell me, how it comes, that, after having evaded all my fond enquiries, I now find you in Lord Hectic's own apartments, and studiously concealed at my approach?

Louisa. Yes, Sir; usurp the right which my credulity has given you, to upbraid me with misfortunes which, even at this late period, you have been the cause of.—But for Loveless, Lord Hectic had been unknown.—However, conscious of no ill, I disclaim justification—and Mr. Loveless is, perhaps, the only man on earth to whom I am not solicitous of appearing innocent; because, himself having lost all that was valuable in my eyes, his approbation now can give me no concern.—I beg, Sir, that I may be permitted to depart. (*going.*)

Loveless. Stay, I conjure you, stay:—wrong'd as you have been by my crimes, and now, perhaps, wrong'd by my suspicions, deign to forgive a man, whose strong affection has been his guilt:—by every tie of nature I entreat you, hear me; by our son's welfare, by your hopes of happiness hereafter, inform me why you have eluded all my anxious searches, and found me only in these hated rooms?

Louisa. There was a time when I should not have been suspected on such grounds:—from the tenor of my conduct, even from my enemies, you will learn the

injustice you are now guilty of.—But enough of words have pass'd between us.—In the retirement which I shall seek, and which I hope you will not attempt to invade, no reproaches of mine shall wound your ear again. Oh, Loveless!—protect your son—protect my only child—rear him in the paths of honour—teach him to avoid his father's errors—to lament his mother's fate!—So shall my ebbing life know something of content; and my boy's rising virtues shade his parent's faults, when you can wound, and I can weep no more. [Exit.

Loveless. Yes, I will obey thy injunctions, and not break in upon thy grief.—Every prospect of a reconciliation is now at an end—what then remains for me?—a father's rage—a father's vengeful sword. [Exit.

SCENE III.

Another Apartment in LORD HECTIC'S House, with folding-doors in the back Scene.

LADY BETTY WORMWOOD and MISS PENELOPE

ZODIAC, meeting in a great hurry.

Miss Penelope. Fine doings here, indeed, Lady Betty!—so that abominable Louisa has got into the house, at last!—Mercy on us!—What will become of me, as an unmarried lady?

Lady Betty. True, Miss Penelope, you are in the right to be apprehensive in time;—I had just heard of it from my maid.—If it was not proper that some people should think of title and fortune in a great family, I should actually give my brother up.

Miss Penelope. Paugh! The very house is tainted with the creature.—But I have lock'd up my room, lest she should

should run away with some of my poetry.—Those sort of animals are glad to lay their hands upon any thing.

Lady Betty. As to your poetry, I believe you need not have been afraid; for such wretches only steal things of value—but, at all events, the huffley must be disposed of;—I shall consult my attorney immediately—in the mean time, do me the favour to look thro' the key-hole of my Lord's library, and observe what's going forward.

Miss Penelope. I look thro' the key-hole!—Heaven knows what I may be witness to!

Lady Betty. Nay, my dear friend, throw aside these scruples—nobody will suspect you, as you are a learned lady, you know, and not supposed to think about such things. But my brother wou'd never forgive me, tho' I do it entirely out of kindness to him.

Miss Penelope. If you really thought there wou'd be no harm in it, why I wou'd give a peep—merely tho' to oblige you.

Lady Betty. You are too good.—How glad she is to listen!

Miss Penelope. Pray take care that nobody comes.

Enter COLONEL QUORUM, hastily.

Col. Quorum. I am sorry, Lady Betty, to be troublesome—but I have been informed, that a lawyer, on your account, has given great uneasiness to a lady for whom I have a most profound regard. (*seeing Miss Penelope*)—Miss Penelope, I ask ten thousand pardons, I did not intend to mention my attachments any more in your company, but—

Miss Penelope. I beg, Colonel, you will not address your improper discourse to me; as I'm an unmarried woman, and cannot possibly hear it.

Lady Betty. Sir, if my lawyer has been guilty of any severity

severity against the person in question, he did not perhaps know that Colonel Quorum was not very inquisitive about the *character* of the ladies for whom he profess'd a regard.

Col. Quorum. The devil, Madam!—I ask pardon for swearing; but, zounds! her character has been misrepresented—and your Ladyship's usage has driven her from the friends that value her, to seek shelter, perhaps, in solitude.

Miss Penelope. Yes:—at least, if she's not alone, I dare say she has not above one person with her.—Ha! Lady Betty!

Col. Quorum. One person!—who knows, but she is now wandering thro' woods and wilds, friendless and unattended, and her tender frame exposed to every hardship?

Lady Betty. I won't say what her tender frame may be exposed to; but I am sure, if she is wandering thro' woods and wilds, she has met with them in my Lord's library.

Col. Quorum. Upon my honour, I can't comprehend what your Ladyship means; but sure, after the importunities she had already withstood from your brother—she deserved every respect.

Lady Betty. But are you so certain she has withstood those importunities?

Col. Quorum. Confusion, Madam!—permit me to inform you, that she has withstood the most honourable temptations; I only wish that she might appear, to confound all the ill-natur'd surmises of her enemies.

Lady Betty. Well, Colonel, if you are so desirous of her appearing, I believe you have nothing in the world to do, but to open that door.

Col. Quorum. Zounds!—'tis impossible!—and if I thought so, I'd have the *Posse Comitatus*, and bring her

to

to light immediately—I have already dispatch'd my clerk, with a search-warrant and two field-pieces, to Sir Gregory Glovetop's; and by Heavens I'll leave no corner unsearch'd!—nay, I'll break the door open myself;—am I not a justice of peace? and don't I know the law upon these matters?

Lady Betty. I hope he will do it.—How I shall enjoy the creature's confusion!

Col. Quorum. I say, in the King's name, open the door; that justice may enter, and guilt be put to flight.

Swagger. (*throwing open the Glass Doors, and coming out half asleep.*) The devil burn me, but what is all this bother here?—Can't a gentleman study, without being interrupted?

Col. Quorum. There, Madam, I told you there was nothing pure in that apartment; and the Captain is a proof of it!

Miss Penelope. Pure, Colonel! I never thought there was—but I shall be look'd on as a fallen star myself, if I stay any longer.

Lady Betty. Some people will not believe their own eyes, nor other people their own ears—but, thank Heaven! my senses are perfect; and I shall take my leave of people who have lost theirs. [Exit.

Miss Penelope. Ayé, to be sure—the ignorance of some folks is astonishing. [Exit.

Col. Quorum. (*speaking after them*) Yes, ladies, and the malice of others.—But, by Heaven, if Lord Hectic only dares to say that he has *seen* an apartment belonging to Louisa; or if you, Sir,—but I know the state of your feelings already, and how little they resemble those of your countrymen.

Swagger. Upon my shoul, if any body knows any thing

thing of my feeling, its more than I do—and by my faith they may keep their knowledge to themselves.

Col. Quorum. Shew me the way to his Lordship.

Swagger. I shew you the way!

Col. Quorum. Blood and thunder!—do you dispute?

Swagger. O, by no means—I'd sooner shew you to the devil.

[*Goes through the folding-doors, Colonel following.*]

S C E N E IV.

The Grove.

Enter CAPTAIN HARDY and LOVELESS, meeting.

Hardy. At length then we are met—few words are best, when language wou'd but ill describe the weight of guilt, or paint the feelings of an injur'd parent. Come, Sir, draw and defend yourself—justice upbraids my slow revenge, and my poor child's departed spirit calls on her father to vindicate her memory.

Loveless. Hold, Captain Hardy! hold!—nor force me to raise my arm against a man for whom my heart already bleeds.—Your daughter lives.

Hardy. Paltry artifice!—Her death, alas! is not less certain to me than her dishonour—therefore drop this unnecessary parley, and what you cannot justify, dare at least defend.

Loveless. For Heaven's sake, Sir, urge me no farther—at least satisfy yourself of the reality of your daughter's existence. On my honour she lives—lives to console your afflictions; would I could add, to join her entreaties to mine, to bury your resentment!

Hardy. Impossible—'tis nothing but a mean subterfuge.—Draw, I insist upon it, this moment—for, sunk and despicable

despicable as thou art, not even the contempt thou meritest shall save thee. *(they fight.)*

Enter LOUISA, HARRIOT, BELCOUR, and the CHILD.

(She throws herself on her knees between them.)

Louisa. Hold, hold, your vengeful arms—see at your feet the unhappy cause of all your animosity.—O, my father—let me not lose that title in the very moment I recover it—make not an orphan of my infant child.

Hardy. My daughter alive!—imploping those who most have wrong'd her!

Louisa. Yes, my honour'd sire—your long-lost daughter sues for your compassion. Oh, my father—will you forgive the errors of my youth—pardon the sorrows I have brought upon you—and, in mercy to your daughter, sheath your sword?

Hardy. Rise, my child.—You are not the offender—but you know not what you ask—your sufferings now call louder for redress. *(offering again to fight, prevented by BELCOUR)* Well, Sir, we shall yet meet—*(putting up his sword)* a father's vengeance cannot be eluded.—My child's misfortunes do not want forgiveness—but her unmerited disgrace shall be atoned.

Belcour. Pray let me interpose—as friend to all, as friend to nature and humanity.—“My Harriet too, the companion of your daughter's lonely hours, shall join her solicitations to mine—we have both been faithful witnesses of Loveless's contrition and his pangs, when they must have been sincere”—had he fallen by your arm, the last distribution of his effects would have done credit to his honour, to his affection, to his repentance. We have painted them all to your daughter, and nature pleads strongly on his side—let your consent then authorize her forgiveness.

Hardy. Your forgiveness!—and is it so, my child?

Louisa. O frown not on me, Sir—doom'd to long anguish and unceasing tears, merited perhaps by my own unguardedness, never again shall your Julia indulge her feelings, but when your approbation first sanctifies her choice.

Hardy. (*taking her hand*) Spoke like the daughter my heart pants again to be allied with—look then with resentment on a man who left thee to sorrow and to shame—Come, my poor suffering child, and shew that insolent, who dar'd reject thee in his proudest hour, that thou can'st rise above the day of thy humiliation. (*offers to lead her out*)

Loveless. (*in great agitation*) Let my dear boy then, our pledge of former tenderness, remain with me; and make me some amends for the loss of his unrelenting grandfire, and too cruel mother.

Louisa. (*looking at her father, then at Loveless*) O, Sir; forgive me, if nature claims one tear, that yet rends my heart!—and tell me, oh, my father—tell me how—how a parent ought to act—

Harriet. (*advancing with the child*) Look, Sir, on this blameless infant, whose childhood has been mark'd with calamity,—whose growing years can open only to his father's anguish, and his mother's grief—think that your forgiveness can obliterate them all—and then deny it to him, if you can.

Hardy. I am conquer'd—I am not proof against that innocent (*clasping the child*)—come, my poor mourner, to my aged arms, while yet I've life to succour you.—Oh! Loveless, forgive my hasty rage, your father now requests it.—Approach, my child (*to his daughter*)—lend me your hand—thus I bestow it; and thus with nature's tenderest

tie I bind it fast (*placing the child between them*)—bless the sweet instrument of my forgiveness; and cherish him as the source of your unfading love.

Loveless. (*embracing her*). My Julia—my recover'd wife!—tears choak my utterance.

Louisa. Loveless, to find thee thus—a convert to that charming tenderness, which, founded in honour alone, brings every permanent and soft delight—to see my honour'd father smiling on his new-born joys—to clasp my much-lov'd friend (*to Harriet*) and know her happy as her heart can desire, I will freely and gratefully acknowledge fate has not left me now one wish to form.

Enter COLONEL QUORUM.

Col. Quorum. Separate the parties immediately, I say, before they do any mischief.—While I am a magistrate no duel shall be tolerated.—Louisa here!—I hope, Madam, you were not going to engage.

Loveless. Yes, Colonel, and for life, I flatter myself—Louisa is my Julia—is my wife.

Col. Quorum. Your wife!

Loveless. I do not wonder at your astonishment; but you soon shall be appriz'd of every thing—you, Sir, are entitled to our confidence as well as friendship, for I know no one to whom this lady has been more oblig'd.—Your good opinion, I am inform'd, remained unaltered by her distress.

Col. Quorum. Ah! I am afraid there was a little of self-love in that, after all.—But if you, Madam, can forget my passion, I will endeavour to forget it too.

Enter LORD HECTIC.

Lord Hectic. Well, Mr. Loveless, I see you are alive—
and

and therefore I hope I am not too late for a second—The ladies here!—Oh—hem!—then Mars must yield to Venus.

Enter LADY BETTY and MISS PENELOPE.

Lady Betty. My brother's voice!—then I am sure the odious creature is not far off, and I dare say encircled with the men too.

Miss Penelope. Yes, always wand'ring into another person's sphere.

Hardy. Pray who are these *good-natured* ladies, that are pleas'd to make such *kind* observations on my daughter.

Lord Hastic. One of these ladies I have the honour to call sister, and the other is a virgin aunt of this gentleman—but I really can't answer for either of their *good-natures*. However, Madam, as you are now in the possession of my friend Loveless—who I told you was a good sort of man, only a little formal, I will give up my pretensions, and fairly confess you are in better hands.—Ah! that frame must remain vacant, I see. (*aside*)

Loveless. My Lord, I thank you, and if you will permit me to offer you and these ladies one word of advice, it would be, that, while you desisted from attempting to give cause for scandal, they should relinquish exercising it without any cause at all.

Enter SIR GREGORY.

Sir Gregory. And so, child, you have broke through all etiquette, and actually been forward enough to step out of my house with a gentleman, perhaps of no precedence at all, and without a pedigree!—I should have been exceedingly angry, but I never am vex'd before good company.

Loveless. Sir Gregory, Mr. Belcour is my friend, and his rank and fortune will entitle him, I believe, in your opinion,

opinion, to pardon at court—and now let me introduce you to a lady, formerly an acquaintance of your's.

Sir Gregory. What, Louisa!—very true—one of the household, I protest—ah I said, if she had a proper idea of consequence, and got quit of sorrow and affection, and all that, she would do very well yet—and my little fellow here shall be a page after all—and I'll keep my promise, and teach him the true court-step myself—ha! ha!—Soft and majestic, with a little grace upon the toe. (*moving about*)

Louisa. Ah, Sir Gregory—you have been somewhat wanting in politeness to me, but I forgive you.—Restored to objects dearer to me than life, I can have no right to complain.

Surrounded thus with all that life can give
To warm my heart, and make me wish to live;
Charm'd with the generous friends, who, circled here,
Feel for each pang, and give me tear for tear,
Be it mine to thank them for their tender cares,
And let my future hours be wholly theirs.

4 AP 54

F I N I S.

THE EPITAPH

Spoken by MISS FARREN.
By EDWARD TOPHAM, Esq.

FLIVE dismal acts consum'd in lamentation,
Our Author marries me for Reparation!
—Well—the we women are, as grey-beards say,
In duty bound to love and to obey;
And, tho' beset with cares of peace and strife,
Repent is still the lot of married life;
With less dishonour I meet the awful sentence,
Since wedlock puts an end to my repentance.

From this bright hour shall gayer scenes arise,
Such as may charm a female patriot's eyes,
Whose great ambition soars to nobler plans
Than goat-s-beard tippets, or than Marlborough fans:
Whose taste the rage for Opera can defy,
And bear to live—the Puccinotti die:
With strange ill-bred indifference can view
VESTIS on one leg, or—the Dogs on two.

But as we women are forbid to roam,
And though we will speak last—must speak at home—
To spare I delegate my vocal powers,
He knows my voice—and bears it at all hours—
Thus, hat in hand, and poiz'd upon one leg,
He'll start with—"Mr. Speaker!—Sir—I beg
"One word."—"Oh, hear him! hear him!—I defy
"The honourable member in my eye."

Then o'er the Indian plains his forces rally,
Rave about TIPPOO SAIB and HEYDER ALLY;
While I, the member's wife, shall bear a shawl
Given by some ponderous prince of Leadenhall:
Or, up all night, with fresh impatience wait,
To read next noon the Chronicled debate;
Where, in good style, and better words convey'd,
Spouse wanders at the speeches he has made,
And, with the borrow'd grace enamour'd gown,
Stares o'er the tropes and figures—not his own.

Such is the potent spell that all bewitches—
"For who would fardels bear,"—that could make speeches?
"Who brook th' oppressor's wrong—the proud man's eye,
When he might rise again—with, I reply?
"Or who would groan beneath life's weary prate,"
Who quietly might sleep thro' a debate?
But—there are charms from oratory flow,
Which those who only bear, can never know.
Yet, lest I press too long the speaker's art,
Pass me your vote of thanks—and I depart.

